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# SPONSORS EDITION

## COMPLETE WORKS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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*The*

# SPONSORS EDITION

OF

## THE COMPLETE WORKS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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Johnwesley Hill

Chancellor

# Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln



Complete Works of
Abraham Lincoln
Edited by
JOHN G. NICOLAY and JOHN HAY
With an Introduction by
JOHN WESLEY HILL, and Special Articles
New and Enlarged Edition
VOLUME I

DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

WASHINGTON

February 12, 1904.

Dear sir:-

I have received your letter of the 11th of February.

The portrait of the younger man of the group is of myself. The other, with a beard is Mr. Nicolay. The photograph was made, I think, in the year 1863.

Yours very truly

John Hay

Judd Stewart, Esquire,
71 Broadway, New York.

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# Abraham Lincoln

*Edited by*

JOHN G. NICOLAY *and* JOHN HAY

With an Introduction *by*
JOHN WESLEY HILL, and Special Articles
*by* OTHER EMINENT PERSONS

*New and Enlarged Edition*

VOLUME I

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

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JOHN G. NICOLAY *and* JOHN HAY

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# Introduction

THIRTY years ago General Oliver Otis Howard founded Lincoln Memorial University at Cumberland Gap, Tennessee. This was in fulfillment of his promise to President Lincoln that if he survived the Civil War he would do something for the educational opportunity of the Southern Highlanders.

In his appeal to Howard for this help, Lincoln spoke of these mountaineers as "My people." They are the descendants of the early pioneers. In response to that entreaty Lincoln Memorial University was established. Today with a student body of one thousand, a faculty gathered from the great educational institutions of the country, a board of trustees of representative Americans, it is forging to the front as an institution permeated with the spirit of Lincoln and dedicated to his ideals.

We frequently hear the exclamation: "Ah, if Lincoln were here!" True, his physical presence is no more, but he is here in an ever widening spiritual influence; in dynamic leadership;

in luminous ideals and inspiration to good citizenship.

At Lincoln Memorial University an applied science is being made of the principles which Lincoln breathed into the soul of America. These principles are fundamental to our national life, the cornerstone indeed of our national stability. Lincoln is still proclaiming them; his voice vibrates in his recorded words. It rings in the inimitable style of everything he spoke and wrote. We cannot overemphasize the educational effect of his words upon the public mind, especially at a time when so many strange doctrines are in the air and when revolutionary agitators seek to list Lincoln as a radical. The answer is his own words, words that reveal his conservatism and are the beacon of orderly government and liberty under law.

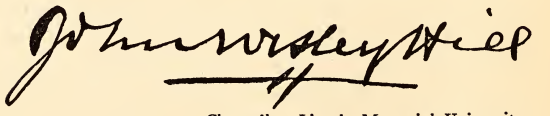
The hour is opportune, therefore, for a Lincoln Renaissance, a revival of his letters, a reappraisal of his words, a return to the principles for which he lived and died; the divine right of liberty in man; "Government of the people, for the people, and by the people;" law, order and Constitutional authority; religious tolerance; racial amity; the substitution of the Golden Rule for the rule of gold; "A just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations;" and the solution of every problem "With

malice toward none and charity for all" and "firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right."

There is nothing Utopian or obsolete in these articles of faith. They are instinct with life, applicable to conditions today and adaptable to all time. They strike at the roots of things, deal with essentials and result in mental and spiritual illumination and transformation. Ethical tinkering, psychological cobbling and socialistic white-washing will accomplish nothing. Only the spirit of Lincoln, his love of the truth, his sympathy with humanity, his devotion to liberty and his faith in the Eternal will bring the "New birth of freedom" for which he plead at Gettysburg, reinstate democracy as the invincible bodyguard of liberty and preserve representative government from the wrecking forces of ignorance and cupidity.

The publication of the Works of Abraham Lincoln by Lincoln Memorial University is in response to a growing interest in what Lincoln thought and taught and wrought. It will open a fountain of Lincolniana to which all true Americans will repair to refresh their faith in, and love and zeal for, American ideals and institutions. Performing this national service it will likewise hasten the full realization of Lincoln's dream for an educational opportunity

for his people. He little thought while making this appeal that his influence would so enlarge throughout the world that the compilation of his writings and speeches would some day be utilized in providing an endowment for the educational institution which he visualized for the mental and spiritual uplift and enrichment of the underprivileged youth of the land. It is fitting that the Works of Lincoln should be published and distributed by the University which stands as his Living Memorial and that from the sale of these works there should accumulate a great and noble endowment for the education of American youth in that citizenship worthy the land of Lincoln and the flag he served and saved; and that every purchaser of this Lincolnian legacy should become a supporter of the University founded in his name, a silent partner in the ministry of this Educational Light House of the Mountains, which light, we hope, like that of Calais, shall never grow dim.



Chancellor, Lincoln Memorial University

# Preface

"May 30, 1893.

*"My dear Nicolay:* As you and Colonel Hay have now brought your great work to a most successful conclusion by the publication of your life of my father, I hope and request that you and he will supplement it by collecting, editing, and publishing the speeches, letters, state papers, and miscellaneous writings of my father. You and Colonel Hay have my consent and authority to obtain for yourselves such protection by copyright, or otherwise, in respect to the whole or any part of such a collection, as I might for any reason be entitled to have.

"Believe me, very sincerely yours,

"ROBERT T. LINCOLN.

"JOHN G. NICOLAY."

Both in fulfilment of the request contained in the foregoing letter, and in execution of a long-cherished design, we present to the public this

edition of the Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, hoping and trusting that it will be received as a welcome addition to American historical literature.

JNO. G. NICOLAY,
JOHN HAY.

More than thirty years have elapsed since the preceding words were written, and during that period the assiduity of a multitude of Lincoln collectors has brought to light a large amount of manuscript material which inevitably escaped even such conscientious workers as Nicolay and Hay. The collectors have been so diligent during this period it is hardly probable that any of Lincoln's writings of importance can be any longer undiscovered. The aim has been to collect this material, add it to the work of the two great biographers, and so make a complete and definitive edition.

The chronological arrangement of the original edition has been followed and all new additions to the text inserted in their respective places and marked with an asterisk.

Explanatory and biographical notes have been added where deemed necessary to explain obscure allusions or to preserve the continuity of the narrative. These notes are mostly new;

those for which Nicolay and Hay remain responsible are in this edition signed with their initials.

Lincoln's personality inspired hundreds of the most prominent men of the 19th century to utter some tribute to his genius. The best and most appropriate of these have been selected as introductions to the different volumes of this edition.

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Special thanks are also due to numerous private collectors who have assisted the work by giving valuable suggestions and lending autograph letters, illustrations, etc., particularly to Mr. Judd Stewart of Plainfield, N. J., Major William H. Lambert of Philadelphia, Mr. C. W. McLellan of New York, Judge Daniel Fish of Minneapolis, and Mr. Richard Watson Gilder, editor of the "Century Magazine."

# Lincoln as a Writer[1]

OF STYLE, in the ordinary use of the word, Lincoln may be said to have had little. He certainly did not strive for an artistic method of expression through such imitation of the masters, for instance, as Robert Louis Stevenson's. There was nothing ambitiously elaborate or self-consciously simple in Lincoln's way of writing. He had not the scholar's range of words. He was not always grammatically accurate. He would doubtless have been very much surprised if any one had told him that he had a "style" at all. And yet, because he was determined to be understood, because he was honest, because he had a warm and true heart, because he had read good books eagerly and not coldly, and because there was in him a native good taste, as well as a strain of imagination, he achieved a singularly clear and forcible style, which took color from his own noble character, and became a thing individual and distinguished.

He was, indeed, extremely modest about his accomplishments. His great desire was to con-

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vince those whom he addressed, and if he could do this,—if he could make his views clear to them, still more if he could make them appear reasonable,—he was satisfied. In one of his speeches in the great debate with Douglas he said: "Gentlemen, Judge Douglas informed you that this speech of mine was probably carefully prepared. I admit that it was. I am not a master of language; I have not a fine education; I am not capable of entering into a disquisition upon dialectics, as I believe you call it; but I do not believe the language I employed bears any such construction as Judge Douglas puts upon it. But I don't care about a quibble in regard to words. I know what I meant, and I will not leave this crowd in doubt, if I can explain it to them, what I really meant in the use of that paragraph."

Who are, to Americans at least, the two most interesting men of action of the nineteenth century? Why not Napoleon and Lincoln? No two men could have been more radically different in many ways; but they were both great rulers, one according to the "good old plan" of might, the other by the good new plan of right: autocrat—democrat. They were alike in this—that both were intensely interesting personalities; both were moved by imagination; and both acquired remarkable power of expression. One

used this power to carry out his own sometimes wise, sometimes selfish, purposes; to deceive and to dominate; the other for the expression of truth and the persuasion of his fellowmen.

Napoleon's literary art was the making of phrases which pierced like a Corsican knife or tingled the blood like the call of a trumpet. His words went to their mark quick as a stroke of lightning. When he speaks it is as if an earthquake had passed under one's feet.

Lincoln's style is very different; heroic, appealing, gracious or humorous, it does not so much startle as melt the heart. These men were alike in this—that they learned to express themselves by dint of long practice, and both in youth wrote much nonsense. Napoleon in his young days wrote romance and history; Lincoln wrote verse and composed speeches. Napoleon failed as a literary man; Lincoln certainly did not make any great success as a lyceum lecturer; in fact, his style was at its best only when his whole heart was enlisted.

Lincoln's style, at its best, is characterized by great simplicity and directness, which in themselves are artistic qualities. In addition there is an agreeable cadence, not over-done except in one curious instance,—a passage of the Second Inaugural,—where it deflects into actual rhythm and rhyme:

Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—
That this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away.

This does not spoil, but it somewhat injures, one of the most memorable of his writings.

Then there is in Lincoln a quaintness, a homeliness and humor of illustration, along with a most engaging frankness and intellectual honesty. The reader has both an intellectual and moral satisfaction in the clearness and fairness of the statement. All this affects agreeably the literary form, and helps to give Lincoln's style at times the charm of imaginative utterance; for imagination in literature is, essentially, the faculty of seeing clearly and the art of stating clearly the actual reality. There was nothing of invention in Lincoln's imagination; his was the imagination that is implied in a strong realization of the truth of things in the mind of the writer or speaker.

When these letters and speeches of Lincoln were appearing in the papers as part of the news of the day, I wonder how many of us who were then living appreciated them from the literary point of view. I remember that at a certain period, some time after the war, I seemed for the first time to awake fully to the attraction of Lincoln's style. Beginning with the inimitable

speech at Gettysburg, I reread many of his writings, and felt everywhere his genius for expression.

Where and how did Lincoln gain this mastery of expression? He said of himself:

> The aggregate of all his schooling did not amount to one year. He was never in a college or academy as a student. . . . What he has in the way of education he has picked up. After he was twenty-three and had separated from his father, he studied English grammar—imperfectly, of course, but so as to speak and write as well as he now does. He studied and nearly mastered the six books of Euclid since he was a member of Congress. He regrets his want of education and does what he can to supply the want.

As a boy at home we are told that he would write, and do sums in arithmetic, on the wooden shovel by the fireside, shaving off the used surface and beginning again. At nineteen it is recorded that he "had read every book he could find, and could spell down the whole country." He read early the Bible, Aesop's "Fables," "Robinson Crusoe," "Pilgrim's Progress," a history of the United States, Weems's "Life of Washington," Franklin's "Autobiography"; later, the life of Clay and the works of Burns and Shakspere. Not a bad list of books if taken

seriously and not mixed with trash; for, of course, culture has to do not so much with the extent of the information as with the depth of the impression.

The youthful Lincoln pondered also over the Revised Statutes of Indiana; and "he would sit in the twilight and read a dictionary as long as he could see." John Hanks said: "When Abe and I returned to the house from work he would go to the cupboard, snatch a piece of corn-bread, take down a book, sit down, cock his legs up as high as his head, and read."

At twenty-four, when he was supposed to be keeping a shop, Nicolay and Hay speak of the "grotesque youth, habited in homespun tow, lying on his back, with his feet on the trunk of the tree, and poring over his books by the hour, grinding around with the shade as it shifted from north to east."

The youth not only read and thought, but wrote, among other things, nonsensical verses; and he composed speeches. He went early into politics, and soon became a thoughtful and effective speaker and debater. Of the language that Lincoln heard and used in boyhood, says Nicolay, in an essay on "Lincoln's Literary Experiments" printed since the "Life" was issued, "though the vocabulary was scanty, the words were short and forcible." He learned among

men and women poor and inured to hardship how the plain people think and feel.

In his young manhood at Springfield he measured wits with other bright young lawyers, in plain and direct language before plain and simple-minded auditors, either in political discussion or in the court-room; either in the capital or in the country towns of Illinois. His mathematical and legal studies were an aid to precise statement, and his native honesty made him frank and convincing in argument. He felt himself to be a poor defender of a guilty client, and sometimes shirked the job.

If for a brief period in his youth he indulged in anything resembling the spread-eagle style of oratory, he was quick, as Nicolay declares, to realize the danger and overcome the temptation. His secretary relates that in his later years he used to repeat with glee the description of the Southwestern orator of whom it is said: "He mounted the rostrum, threw back his head, shined his eyes, and left the consequences to God."

By practice in extemporary speaking Lincoln learned to do a most difficult thing—namely, to produce literature on his legs. It is difficult thus to produce literature, because the words must flow with immediate precision. It is unusual for a politician to go through life always

addressing audiences, and yet always avoiding the orator's temptation to please and captivate by extravagant and false sentiment and statement. The writer, and particularly the political writer, is tempted to this sort of immorality, but still more the speaker, for with the latter the reward of applause is prompt and seductive. It it amazing to look over Lincoln's record and find how seldom he went beyond bounds, how fair and just he was, how responsible and conscientious his utterances long before these utterances became of national importance. Yet it was largely because of this very quality that they assumed national importance. And then both his imagination and his sympathy helped him here, for while he saw and keenly felt his own side of the argument, he could see as clearly, and he could sympathetically understand, the side of his opponent.

Lincoln was barely twenty-three when, as a candidate for the legislature, he issued a formal address to the people of Sangamon County. It is the first paper preserved by Nicolay and Hay in their collection of his addresses and letters. Nicolay well says that "as a literary production no ordinary college graduate would need to be ashamed of it."

In this address we already find that honest purpose, that "sweet reasonableness" and per-

suasiveness of speech, which is characteristic of his later and more celebrated utterances. In his gathered writings and addresses we find, indeed, touches of the true Lincoln genius here and there from the age of twenty-three on. In the literary record of about his thirty-third year occur some of the most surprising proofs of the delicacy of his nature—of that culture of the soul which had taken place in him in the midst of such harsh and unpromising environment. Reference is made to the letters written to his young friend Joshua F. Speed, a member of the Kentucky family associated by marriage with the family of the poet Keats.

In Lincoln's early serious verse the feeling is right, though the art is lacking; but the verses are interesting in that they show a good ear. Note has been made of a pleasing cadence in Lincoln's prose; and it is not strange that he should show a rythmical sense in his verse. He showed a good deal of common sense in not going on with this sort of thing, and in confining the publication of his inadequate rhymes to the sacred privacy of indulgent and sympathetic friendship.

We come now to Lincoln the accomplished orator. His speech in Congress on the 28th of January, 1848, on the Mexican War, strikes the note of solemn verity and of noble indignation

which a little later rang through the country, and, with other voices, aroused it to a sense of impending danger.

It was in 1851 that he wrote some family letters that not only show him in a charming light as the true and wise friend of his shiftless stepbrother, but the affectionate guardian of his stepmother, who had been such a good mother to him. There is something Greek in the clear phrase and pure reason of these epistles.

*Dear Brother:* When I came into Charleston day before yesterday, I learned that you are anxious to sell the land where you live and move to Missouri. I have been thinking of this ever since, and cannot but think such a notion is utterly foolish. What can you do in Missouri better than here? Is the land any richer? Can you there, any more than here, raise corn and wheat and oats without work? Will anybody there, any more than here, do your work for you? If you intend to go to work, there is no better place than right where you are; if you do not intend to go to work, you cannot get along anywhere. Squirming and crawling about from place to place can do no good. You have raised no crop this year; and what you really want is to sell the land, get the money, and spend it. Part with the land you have, and, my life upon it, you will never after own a spot big enough to bury you in.

We find in his Peoria speech of 1854 a statement

of his long contention against the extension of slavery, and a proof of his ability to cope intellectually with the ablest debaters of the West. His Peoria speech was in answer to Judge Douglas, with whom four years afterward he held the far-resounding debate. Lincoln was now forty-five years old, and his oratory contains that moral impetus which was to give it greater and greater power.

In 1856 occurred the Frémont and Dayton campaign, which came not very far from being the Frémont and Lincoln campaign. In a speech in this campaign he used a memorable phrase: "All this talk about the dissolution of the Union is humbug, nothing but folly. *We do not want to dissolve the Union; you shall not.*" In his famous speech delivered at Springfield, Illinois, at the close of the Republican State Convention of 1858,—in which he had been named as candidate for United States Senator,—the skilful and serious orator rises not merely to the broad level of nationality, but to the plane of universal humanity. As events thicken and threaten, his style becomes more solemn. So telling at last his power of phrase that it would hardly seem to be an exaggeration to declare that the war itself was partly induced by the fact that Abraham Lincoln was able to express his pregnant thoughts with the art of a

master. How familiar now these words of prophecy:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided.

The cadence of Lincoln's prose with its burden of high hope, touched with that heroism which is so near to pathos, reminds one of the *Leit-motif,* the "leading motive" in symphony and music-drama of which musicians make use, and which is especially characteristic of the manner of Wagner:

Two years ago the Republicans of the nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger, with every external circumstance against us. Of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then to falter now —now, when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. *We shall not fail—if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come.*

We have arrived now at the period of the joint debate between Lincoln and Douglas. In Lincoln we have the able and practised attorney, with one side of his nature open to the eternal; in Douglas the skilful lawyer, adroit and ambitious, not easily moved by the moral appeals which so quickly took hold upon Lincoln, but a man capable of right and patriotic action when the depths of his nature were stirred.

Among the most characteristic qualities of Lincoln's expression are its morality, its insight, and its prophecy; and in the now famous debate he reached well-nigh the fullness of his power to put great thoughts into fitting language. Straight his words went into the minds and hearts of eagerly listening crowds. The question, he contended, was as to the right or the wrong of slavery:

> That [he said] is the real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time, and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the divine right of kings.

A recent biographer of Lincoln, Mr. John T. Morse, Jr., says that "it is just appreciation, not extravagance, to say that the cheap and miserable little volume, now out of print, containing in bad newspaper type, 'The Lincoln and Douglas Debates,' holds some of the masterpieces of oratory of all ages and nations."

It is interesting to recall the fact that, in the pause of his affairs after the debate with Douglas, Lincoln took up the then popular custom of lyceum-lecturing. In the very year before his election to the Presidency the great statesman and orator was engaged in delivering a totally uninspired lecture on "Discoveries, Inventions, and Improvements" in towns near Springfield, and in Springfield itself on Washington's Birthday in the fateful year of 1860. There was little in this lecture to attract the slightest attention; and while it may have given satisfaction among neighbors, it could never have added to his fame. Yet when he had the opportunity of an engagement to lecture on political subjects in this same month of February, he made what is now known as the "great address" at Cooper Union. Soon after this came his nomination, then his election to the Presidency of the United States; and with these events he may be said to have resumed his true literary career, for (as I have said) his style was at its best only when

he was dealing with a cause in which his whole heart was enlisted.

By way of contrast to what has passed and is to come, let us cull some of the passages in which shone Lincoln's wit and humor. How pleasing it is to know that his melancholy nature, his burdened spirit, were refreshed with glimpses—often storms—of mirth! They say that to see Lincoln laugh was an amazing sight.

The humor of which we learn so much from those who heard him tell his quaint and often Rabelaisian stories came out sharply and roughly in one of his congressional speeches, in which he referred with grim sarcasm to General Cass's military record as used for political ammunition. Here are some later touches of his wit: "The plainest print cannot be read through a gold eagle." "If you think you can slander a woman into loving you, or a man into voting for you, try it till you are satisfied." Again: "Has Douglas the exclusive right in this country to be on all sides of all questions?" Again: "In his numerous speeches now being made in Illinois, Senator Douglas regularly argues against the doctrine of the equality of men; and while he does not draw the conclusion that the superiors ought to enslave the inferiors, he evidently wishes his hearers to draw that conclusion. He shirks the responsibility of pulling the house

down, but he digs under it that it may fall of its own weight."

"The enemy would fight," said the President once, in a letter to General Hooker, "in intrenchments, and have you at a disadvantage, and so, man for man, worst you at that point, while his main force would in some way be getting an advantage of you northward. In one word, I would not take any risk of being entangled upon the river like an ox jumped half over a fence and liable to be torn by dogs front and rear without a fair chance to gore one way and kick the other." It was also to Hooker that he wrote: "Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship."

In a letter written in 1859 to a Boston committee he said, in describing a change in party standards: "I remember being once much amused at seeing two partially intoxicated men engaged in a fight with their greatcoats on, which fight, after a long and rather harmless contest, ended in each having fought himself out of his own coat and into that of the other. If the two leading parties of this day are really identical with the two in the days of Jefferson and Adams, they have performed the same feat as the two drunken men." And this is from his very last public address: "Concede that the

new government of Louisiana is only to what it should be as the egg is to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it."

A specimen of his spoken wit is the story told of his reply to the countryman who at a reception said,—in the prepared speech that patriots so often shoot at the President as they plunge past him in the processions through the White House,—"I believe in God Almighty and Abraham Lincoln." "You're more than half right," quickly answered the President. When, at a conference with Confederate leaders, he was reminded by the Southern commissioner, Mr. Hunter, that Charles I entered into an agreement with "parties in arms against the government," Lincoln said: "I do not profess to be posted in history. In all such matters I will turn you over to Seward. All I distinctly recollect about the case of Charles I is that he lost his head."

Lincoln was elected to the Presidency of a country on the verge of civil war. In his farewell to his fellow-townsmen sounds again that musical "motive" of which I have spoken, recurring like the refrain of a sad but heroic poem. Remember the passage quoted before. It occurred in his speech of 1858: "The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail—if we stand firm,

we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come."

In parting from his old neighbors he said:

Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in Him, who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well.

The First Inaugural concludes with a passage of great tenderness. We learn from Nicolay and Hay that the suggestion of that passage, its first draft indeed, came from Seward. But compare this first draft with the passage as amended and adopted by Lincoln! This is Seward's:

I close. We are not, we must not be, aliens or enemies, but fellow-countrymen and brethren. Although passion has strained our bonds of affection too hardly, they must not, I am sure they will not, be broken. The mystic chords which, proceeding from so many battle-fields and so many patriot graves, pass through all the hearts and all hearths in this broad continent of ours, will yet again harmonize in their

ancient music when breathed upon by the guardian angel of the nation.

And this is Lincoln's:

I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

There is in this last something that suggests music; again we hear the strain of the *Leitmotif*. Strangely enough, in 1858 Lincoln himself had used a figure not the same as, but suggestive of, this very one now given by Seward. He was speaking of the moral sentiment, the sentiment of equality, in the Declaration of Independence. "*That,*" he said, "is the electric chord in that Declaration, that links the hearts of patriotic and liberty-loving men together, that will link those patriotic hearts as long as the love of freedom exists in the minds of men throughout the world."

In the final pargaraph of the Second Inaugural we find again the haunting music with which the First Inaugural closed. On the heart

of what American—North or South—are not the words imprinted?

With malice toward none; with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

As the great musician brings somewhere to its highest expression the motive which has been entwined from first to last in his music-drama, so did the expression of Lincoln's passion for his country reach its culmination in the tender and majestic phrases of the Gettysburg Address:

In a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that

cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

But there is a letter of Lincoln's which may well be associated with the Gettysburg Address. It was written, just one year after the delivery of the Address, to a mother who, the President heard, had lost five sons in the army. I believe the number was not so large, though that does not matter.

EXECUTIVE MANSION

Washington, November 21, 1864.

MRS. BIXBY, Boston, Massachusetts.

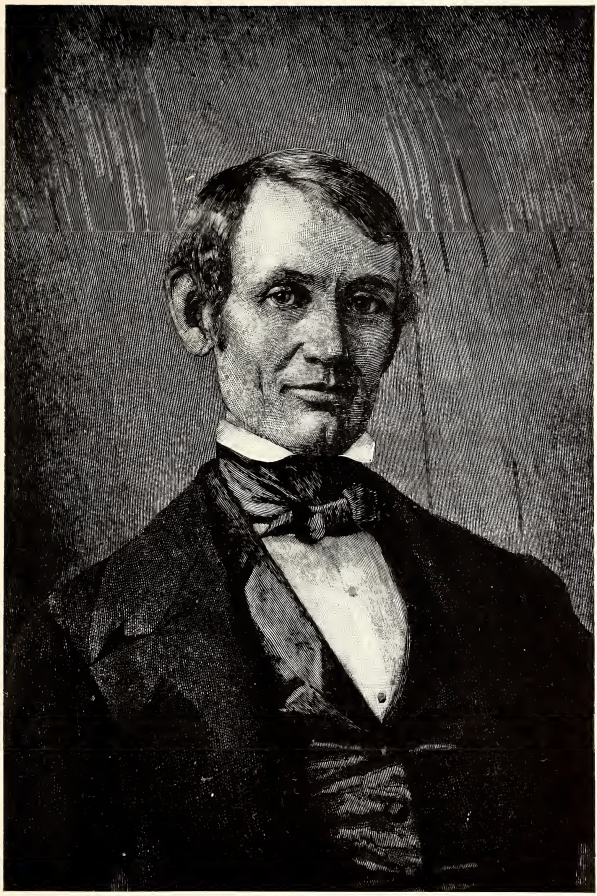
DEAR MADAM: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved

and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom. Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

This letter of consolation in its simplicity and fitness again recalls the Greek spirit. It is like one of those calm monuments of grief which the traveler may still behold in that small cemetery under the deep Athenian sky, where those who have been dead so many centuries are kept alive in the memories of men by an art which is immortal.





First Photograph of Abraham Lincoln

*Wood Engraving by Thomas Johnson from the Original Daguerreotype made about 1848 when Lincoln was thirty-nine years of age. Owned by the Hon. Robert T. Lincoln, through whose courtesy it has been published.*

# Abraham Lincoln[1]

By Richard Henry Stoddard

This man whose homely face you look upon
Was one of Nature's masterful, great men;
Born with strong arms, that unfought battles won,
Direct of speech and cunning with the pen,
Chosen for large designs, he had the art
Of winning with his humor, and he went
Straight to his mark, which was the human heart;
Wise, too, for what he could not break, he bent.
Upon his back a more than Atlas-load,
The burden of the Commonwealth, was laid;
He stooped, and rose up to it, though the road
Shot suddenly downward, not a whit dismayed:
Patiently resolute, what the stern hour
Demanded, that he was,— that Man, that Power.

[1] By special permission of *Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.*

# Illustrations

GROUP OF LINCOLN, NICOLAY, AND HAY . *Frontispiece*

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Fac-simile of the original letter written on Lincoln's Birthday, 1904.

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# Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln

## Volume I

[1832---1848]

# Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln

## Address to the People of Sangamon County, March 9, 1832 [1]

FELLOW-CITIZENS: Having become a candidate for the honorable office of one of your Representatives in the next General Assembly of this State, in accordance with an established custom and the principles of true Republicanism, it becomes my duty to make known to you, the people whom I propose to represent, my sentiments with regard to local affairs.

Time and experience have verified to a demonstration the public utility of internal improvements. That the poorest and most thinly popu-

[1] Lincoln was just past his twenty-third year when he indited this address to the people of Sangamon County. Though defeated in the effort to become a member of the General Assembly of the State of Illinois, his address, distributed in the form of a hand-bill, aroused great interest and enthusiasm among his fellow-citizens. It is worth passing mention to note that this defeat for the Illinois Legislature was the only one Lincoln ever suffered by direct vote of the people.

lated countries would be greatly benefited by the opening of good roads, and in the clearing of navigable streams within their limits, is what no person will deny. Yet it is folly to undertake works of this or any other kind without first knowing that we are able to finish them,—as half-finished work generally proves to be labor lost. There cannot justly be any objection to having railroads and canals, any more than to other good things, provided they cost nothing. The only objection is to paying for them; and the objection arises from the want of ability to pay.

With respect to the County of Sangamon, some more easy means of communication than it now possesses, for the purpose of facilitating the task of exporting the surplus products of its fertile soil, and importing necessary articles from abroad, are indispensably necessary. A meeting has been held by the citizens of Jacksonville and the adjacent country, for the purpose of deliberating and inquiring into the expediency of constructing a railroad from some eligible point on the Illinois River, through the town of Jacksonville, in Morgan County, to the town of Springfield, in Sangamon County. This is, indeed, a very desirable object. No other improvement that reason will justify us in hoping for can equal in utility the railroad. It is a never-failing

source of communication between places of business remotely situated from each other. Upon the railroad the regular progress of commercial intercourse is not interrupted by either high or low water, or freezing weather, which are the principal difficulties that render our future hopes of water communication precarious and uncertain.

Yet, however desirable an object the construction of a railroad through our country may be; however high our imaginations may be heated at thoughts of it,—there is always a heart-appalling shock accompanying the amount of its cost, which forces us to shrink from our pleasing anticipations. The probable cost of this contemplated railroad is estimated at $290,000; the bare statement of which, in my opinion, is sufficient to justify the belief that the improvement of the Sangamon River is an object much better suited to our infant resources.

Respecting this view, I think I may say, without the fear of being contradicted, that its navigation may be rendered completely practicable as high as the mouth of the South Fork, or probably higher, to vessels of from twenty-five to thirty tons burden, for at least one half of all common years, and to vessels of much greater burden a part of the time. From my peculiar circumstances, it is probable that for the last

twelve months I have given as particular attention to the stage of the water in this river as any other person in the country. In the month of March, 1831, in company with others, I commenced the building of a flatboat on the Sangamon, and finished and took her out in the course of the spring. Since that time I have been concerned in the mill at New Salem. These circumstances are sufficient evidence that I have not been very inattentive to the stages of the water. The time at which we crossed the mill-dam being in the last days of April, the water was lower than it had been since the breaking of winter in February, or than it was for several weeks after. The principal difficulties we encountered in descending the river were from the drifted timber, which obstructions all know are not difficult to be removed. Knowing almost precisely the height of water at that time, I believe I am safe in saying that it has as often been higher as lower since.

From this view of the subject it appears that my calculations with regard to the navigation of the Sangamon cannot but be founded in reason; but, whatever may be its natural advantages, certain it is that it never can be practically useful to any great extent without being greatly improved by art. The drifted timber, as I have before mentioned, is the most formidable bar-

rier to this object. Of all parts of this river, none will require so much labor in proportion to make it navigable as the last thirty or thirty-five miles; and going with the meanderings of the channel, when we are this distance above its mouth we are only between twelve and eighteen miles above Beardstown in something near a straight direction; and this route is upon such low ground as to retain water in many places during the season, and in all parts such as to draw two thirds or three fourths of the river water at all high stages.

This route is on prairie-land the whole distance, so that it appears to me, by removing the turf a sufficient width, and damming up the old channel, the whole river in a short time would wash its way through, thereby curtailing the distance and increasing the velocity of the current very considerably, while there would be no timber on the banks to obstruct its navigation in future; and being nearly straight, the timber which might float in at the head would be apt to go clear through. There are also many places above this where the river, in its zigzag course, forms such complete peninsulas as to be easier to cut at the necks than to remove the obstructions from the bends, which, if done, would also lessen the distance.

What the cost of this work would be, I am

unable to say. It is probable, however, that it would not be greater than is common to streams of the same length. Finally, I believe the improvement of the Sangamon River to be vastly important and highly desirable to the people of the county; and, if elected, any measure in the legislature having this for its object, which may appear judicious, will meet my approbation and receive my support.

It appears that the practice of loaning money at exorbitant rates of interest has already been opened as a field for discussion; so I suppose I may enter upon it without claiming the honor, or risking the danger which may await its first explorer. It seems as though we are never to have an end to this baneful and corroding system, acting almost as prejudicially to the general interests of the community as a direct tax of several thousand dollars annually laid on each county for the benefit of a few individuals only, unless there be a law made fixing the limits of usury. A law for this purpose, I am of opinion, may be made without materially injuring any class of people. In cases of extreme necessity, there could always be means found to cheat the law; while in all other cases it would have its intended effect. I would favor the passage of a law on this subject which might not be very easily evaded. Let it be such that the labor and

difficulty of evading it could only be justified in cases of greatest necessity.

Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in. That every man may receive at least a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries, by which he may duly appreciate the value of our free institutions, appears to be an object of vital importance, even on this account alone, to say nothing of the advantages and satisfaction to be derived from all being able to read the Scriptures, and other works both of a religious and moral nature, for themselves.

For my part, I desire to see the time when education—and by its means, morality, sobriety, enterprise, and industry—shall become much more general than at present, and should be gratified to have it in my power to contribute something to the advancement of any measure which might have a tendency to accelerate that happy period.

With regard to existing laws, some alterations are thought to be necessary. Many respectable men have suggested that our estray laws, the law respecting the issuing of executions, the road law, and some others, are deficient in their pres-

ent form, and require alterations. But, considering the great probability that the framers of those laws were wiser than myself, I should prefer not meddling with them, unless they were first attacked by others; in which case I should feel it both a privilege and a duty to take that stand which, in my view, might tend most to the advancement of justice.

But, fellow-citizens, I shall conclude. Considering the great degree of modesty which should always attend youth, it is probable I have already been more presuming than becomes me. However, upon the subjects of which I have treated, I have spoken as I have thought. I may be wrong in regard to any or all of them; but, holding it a sound maxim that it is better only sometimes to be right than at all times to be wrong, so soon as I discover my opinions to be erroneous, I shall be ready to renounce them.

Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether it be true or not, I can say, for one, that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow-men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition is yet to be developed. I am young, and unknown to many of you. I was born, and have ever remained, in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular relations or friends to recom-

mend me. My case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of the country; and, if elected, they will have conferred a favor upon me for which I shall be unremitting in my labors to compensate. But, if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined.

Your friend and fellow-citizen,

A. LINCOLN.

NEW SALEM, March 9, 1832.

## RECEIPT FOR ARMS.

BEARDSTOWN, April 28, 1832.

Special Order (No. —).

The Brigade Inspector, having inspected Captain Abraham Lincoln's Company and mustered them into service, reports that thirty guns are wanting to arm the Company completely. Quartermaster-General Edwards will furnish the Captain with that number of arms, if to be had in his department.

JOHN J. HARDIN, *Brig. Major.*

By order of

BRIGADIER-GENERAL SAMUEL WHITESIDE,
*Commanding B. M. V. Illinois.*

Received April 28, 1832, for the use of the

Sangamon County company under my command, thirty muskets, bayonets, screws, and wipers, which I oblige myself to return upon demand. A. LINCOLN, *Captain.*

| *Guns.* | *Bayonets.* | *Screws.* | *Wipers.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 19 | 15 | 9 | 21 |
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| 1 | 1 | .. | .. |
| 1 | 1 | .. | .. |
| 1 | .. | .. | .. |
| 26 | 20 | 14 | 23 |

## *LETTER TO E. C. BLANKENSHIP

NEW SALEM, Aug. 10, 1833.

E. C. BLANKENSHIP.

*Dear Sir:* In regard to the time David Rankin served the enclosed discharge shows correctly—as well as I can recollect—having no writing to refer. The transfer of Rankin from my company occurred as follows: Rankin having lost his horse at Dixon's ferry, and having acquaintance in one of the foot companies who were going down the river, was desirous to go with them, and one Galishen, being an acquaintance of mine, and belonging to the company in which

Rankin wished to go, wished to leave it and join mine; this being the case it was agreed that they should exchange places and answer to each other's names—as it was expected we all *would* be discharged in *very* few days. As to a blanket —I have no knowledge of Rankin ever getting any. The above embraces all the facts now in my recollection which are pertinent to the case.

I shall take pleasure in giving any further information in my power should you call on me.

Your friend, A. LINCOLN.

## *LETTER AND RECEIPT TO GEORGE SPEARS [1833-1834]

*Mr. Spears:* At your request I send you a receipt for the postage on your paper. I am somewhat surprised at your request. I will, however, comply with it. The law requires Newspaper postage to be paid in advance, and now that I have waited a full year you choose to wound my feelings by insinuating that unless you get a receipt I will probably make you pay it again—

Respectfully, A. LINCOLN.

Received of George Spears in full for postage on the "Sangamon Journal" up to the first of July, 1834.

A. LINCOLN, P. M.

* CERTIFICATE OF SURVEY

January 14, 1834.

Surveyed for Russel Goodby—the West half of the North East quarter of Section 30 in Township 19 North of Range 6 West, Beginning at a White oak 12 inches in diameter leaving N 34 E 84 Link, a White oak 10 inches S 58 W 98 Link,—thence South 40 chains, to a White oak 12 inches N 73 E 20 Links—Thence East 20 chains to a Black oak 12 inches S 54 W 16 Links —Thence North 40 chains to a Post and mound. Thence West 20 chains to the beginning Chainmen.

J. CALHOUN, *S. S. C.*

HERCULES DEMMING. By A. LINCOLN.

TO THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF SANGAMON, AT ITS JUNE TERM 1834

We the undersigned being appointed to view and locate a road, beginning at Musick's ferry on Salt creek, Via New Salem to the county line in the direction to Jacksonville—respectfully report that we have performed the duties of said view and location as required by law, and that we have made the location on good ground and believe the establishment of the same to be necessary and proper.

The enclosed map gives the courses and distances as required by law.

MICHAEL KILLION,
HUGH ARMSTRONG,
A. LINCOLN.

*(Indorsement in pencil on the foregoing.)*

A. Lincoln, 5 days at $3.00 ..... $15.00
John A. Kelsoe, chain bearer for 5 days at 75 cts. ..... 3.75
Robert Lloyd, 5 days at 75 cts ..... 3.75
Hugh Armstrong, for services as axeman, 5 days at 75 cts ..... 3.75
A. Lincoln, for making plat and report .. 2.50

## *REPORT OF ROAD SURVEY, Nov. 4, 1834

*To the County Commissioner's Court for the County of Sangamon:*

We, the undersigned, being appointed to view and relocate a part of the road between Sangamon town and the town of Athens, respectfully report that we have performed the duty of said appointment according to law—and that we have made the said relocation on good ground—and believe the same to be necessary and proper.

JAMES STROWBRIDGE,
LEVI CANTRALL,
A. LINCOLN.

ATHENS, Nov. 4, 1834.

Herewith is the map—The court may allow me the following charges if they think proper—

1 day's labor as surveyor..... $3.00
Making map ..... .50

$3.50

A. LINCOLN.

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF POLITICAL VIEWS[1]

NEW SALEM, June 13, 1836.

*To the Editor of the "Journal":* In your paper of last Saturday I see a communication, over the signature of "Many Voters," in which the candidates who are announced in the "Journal" are called upon to "show their hands." Agreed. Here 's mine.

I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently, I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females).

If elected, I shall consider the whole people

[1] At the time of the publication of this simple "platform" Lincoln held the position of postmaster of New Salem, and was deputy surveyor of Sangamon County. He stood second among the four successful candidates in this election and had become very popular. Two toasts then going the round of political dinners were: "A. Lincoln: One of Nature's noblemen," and "Abraham Lincoln: He has fulfilled the expectations of his friends and disappointed the hopes of his enemies."

of Sangamon my constituents, as well those that oppose as those that support me.

While acting as their representative, I shall be governed by their will on all subjects upon which I have the means of knowing what their will is; and upon all others, I shall do what my own judgment teaches me will best advance their interests. Whether elected or not, I go for distributing the proceeds of the sales of the public lands to the several States, to enable our State, in common with others, to dig canals and construct railroads without borrowing money and paying the interest on it.

If alive on the first Monday in November, I shall vote for Hugh L. White for President.

Very respectfully,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO ROBERT ALLEN

NEW SALEM, June 21, 1836.

*Dear Colonel:* I am told that during my absence last week you passed through this place, and stated publicly that you were in possession of a fact or facts which, if known to the public, would entirely destroy the prospects of N. W. Edwards and myself at the ensuing election; but that, through favor to us, you should forbear to divulge them. No one has needed favors

more than I, and, generally, few have been less unwilling to accept them; but in this case favor to me would be injustice to the public, and therefore I must beg your pardon for declining it. That I once had the confidence of the people of Sangamon, is sufficiently evident; and if I have since done anything, either by design or misadventure, which if known would subject me to a forfeiture of that confidence, he that knows of that thing, and conceals it, is a traitor to his country's interest.

I find myself wholly unable to form any conjecture of what fact or facts, real or supposed, you spoke; but my opinion of your veracity will not permit me for a moment to doubt that you at least believed what you said. I am flattered with the personal regard you manifested for me; but I do hope that, on more mature reflection, you will view the public interest as a paramount consideration, and therefore determine to let the worst come. I here assure you that the candid statement of facts on your part, however low it may sink me, shall never break the tie of personal friendship between us. I wish an answer to this, and you are at liberty to publish both, if you choose. Very respectfully,

A. LINCOLN.

COL. ROBERT ALLEN.

## Letter to Miss Mary Owens

Vandalia, December 13, 1836.

*Mary:* I have been sick ever since my arrival, or I should have written sooner. It is but little difference, however, as I have very little even yet to write. And more, the longer I can avoid the mortification of looking in the post-office for your letter and not finding it, the better. You see I am mad about that old letter yet. I don't like very well to risk you again. I'll try you once more, anyhow.

The new State House is not yet finished, and consequently the legislature is doing little or nothing. The governor delivered an inflammatory political message, and it is expected there will be some sparring between the parties about it as soon as the two Houses get to business. Taylor delivered up his petition for the new county to one of our members this morning. I am told he despairs of its success, on account of all the members from Morgan County opposing it. There are names enough on the petition, I think, to justify the members from our county in going for it; but if the members from Morgan oppose it, which they say they will, the chance will be bad.

Our chance to take the seat of government to Springfield is better than I expected. An inter-

nal-improvement convention was held here since we met, which recommended a loan of several millions of dollars, on the faith of the State, to construct railroads. Some of the legislature are for it, and some against it; which has the majority I cannot tell. There is great strife and struggling for the office of the United States Senator here at this time. It is probable we shall ease their pains in a few days. The opposition men have no candidate of their own, and consequently they will smile as complacently at the angry snarl of the contending Van Buren candidates and their respective friends as the Christian does at Satan's rage. You recollect that I mentioned at the outset of this letter that I had been unwell. That is the fact, though I believe I am about well now; but that, with other things I cannot account for, have conspired, and have gotten my spirits so low that I feel that I would rather be any place in the world than here. I really cannot endure the thought of staying here ten weeks. Write back as soon as you get this, and, if possible, say something that will please me, for really I have not been pleased since I left you. This letter is so dry and stupid that I am ashamed to send it, but with my present feelings I cannot do any better.

Give my best respects to Mr. and Mrs. Able and family. Your friend, LINCOLN.

## *Speech before the Illinois Legislature in January, 1837[1]

*In the House of Representatives, upon the resolution offered by Mr. Linder, to institute an enquiry into the management of the affairs of the State Bank.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Lest I should fall into the too common error, of being mistaken in regard to which side I design to be upon, I shall make it my first care to remove all doubt on that point, by declaring that I am opposed to the resolution under consideration, in toto. Before I proceed to the body of the subject, I will further remark, that it is not without a considerable degree of apprehension, that I venture to cross the track of the gentleman from Coles (Mr. Linder). Indeed, I do not believe I could muster a sufficiency of courage to come in contact with that gentleman, were it not for the fact, that he, some days since, most graciously condescended to assure us that he would never be found wasting

[1] A speech found in the "Sangamon Journal" of January 28, 1837. That paper copied it from the Vandalia "Free Press."

ammunition on *small game*. On the same fortunate occasion, he further gave us to understand, that he regarded *himself* as being decidedly the *superior* of our common friend from Randolph (Mr. Shields); and feeling, as I really do, that I, to say the most of myself, am nothing more than the peer of our friend from Randolph, I shall regard the gentleman from Coles as decidedly my superior also, and consequently, in the course of what I shall have to say, whenever I shall have occasion to allude to that gentleman, I shall endeavor to adopt that kind of court language which I understand to be due to decided superiority. In one faculty, at least, there can be no dispute of the gentleman's superiority over me, and most other men; and that is, the faculty of entangling a subject, so that neither himself, nor any other man, can find head or tail to it. Here he has introduced a resolution, embracing ninety-nine printed lines across common writing paper, and yet more than one half of his opening speech has been made upon subjects about which there is not one word said in his resolution.

Though his resolution embraces nothing in regard to the constitutionality of the Bank, much of what he has said has been with a view to make the impression that it was unconstitutional in its inception. Now, although I am satisfied that an ample field may be found within the pale of

the resolution, at least for small game, yet as the gentleman has travelled out of it, I feel that I may, with all due humility, venture to follow him. The gentleman has discovered that some gentleman at Washington city has been upon the very eve of deciding our Bank unconstitutional, and that he would probably have completed his very authentic decision, had not some one of the Bank officers placed his hand upon his mouth, and begged him to withhold it. The fact that the individuals composing our Supreme Court have, in an official capacity, decided in favor of the constitutionality of the Bank, would, in my mind, seem a sufficient answer to this. It is a fact known to all, that the members of the Supreme Court, together with the Governor, form a Council of Revision, and that this Council approved this Bank Charter. I ask, then, if the extrajudicial decision—not quite, but almost made, by the gentleman at Washington, before whom, by the way, the question of the constitutionality of our Bank never has, nor never can come—is to be taken as paramount to a decision officially made by that tribunal, by which and which alone, the constitutionality of the Bank can ever be settled? But aside from this view of the subject, I would ask, if the committee which this resolution proposes to appoint, are to examine into the constitutionality of the

Bank? Are they to be clothed with power to send for persons and papers, for this object? And after they have found the Bank to be unconstitutional, and decided it so, how are they to enforce their decision? What will their decision amount to? They cannot compel the Bank to cease operations, or to change the course of its operations. What good, then, can their labors result in? Certainly none.

The gentleman asks, if we, without an examination, shall, by giving the State deposits to the Bank, and by taking the stock reserved for the State, legalize its former misconduct? Now I do not pretend to possess sufficient legal knowledge to decide, whether a legislative enactment, proposing to, and accepting from, the Bank, certain terms, which would have the effect to legalize or wipe out its former errors, or not; but I can assure the gentleman, if such should be the effect, he has already got behind the settlement of accounts; for it is well known to all, that the Legislature, at its last session, passed a supplemental Bank charter, which the Bank has since accepted, and which, according to his doctrine, has legalized all the alleged violations of its original charter in the distribution of its stock.

I now proceed to the resolution. By examination it will be found that the first thirty-three lines, being precisely one third of the whole,

relate exclusively to the distribution of the stock by the commissioners appointed by the State. Now, sir, it is clear that no question can arise on this portion of the resolution, except a question between capitalists in regard to the ownership of stock. Some gentlemen have their stock in their hands, while others, who have more money than they know what to do with, want it; and this, and this alone, is the question to settle which we are called on to squander thousands of the people's money. What interest, let me ask, have the people in the settlement of this qustion? What difference is it to them whether the stock is owned by Judge Smith or Sam Wiggins? If any gentleman be entitled to stock in the Bank, which he is kept out of possession of by others, let him assert his right in the Supreme Court, and let him or his antagonist, whichever may be found in the wrong, pay the costs of suit. It is an old maxim, and a very sound one, that he that dances should always pay the fiddler. Now, sir, in the present case, if any gentleman, whose money is a burden to them, choose to lead off a dance, I am decidedly opposed to the people's money being used to pay the fiddler. No one can doubt that the examination proposed by this resolution, must cost the State some ten or twelve thousand dollars; and all this to settle a question in which the people have no interest, and about

which they care nothing. These capitalists generally act harmoniously and in concert, to fleece the people, and now, that they have got into a quarrel with themselves, we are called upon to appropriate the people's money to settle the quarrel.

I leave this part of the resolution and proceed to the remainder. It will be found that no charge in the remaining part of the resolution, if true, amounts to the violation of the Bank charter, except one, which I will notice in due time. It might seem quite sufficient to say no more upon any of these charges or insinuations, than enough to show they are not violations of the charter; yet, as they are ingeniously framed and handled, with a view to deceive and mislead, I will notice in their order, all the most prominent of them. The first of these is in relation to a connection between our Bank and several banking institutions in other States. Admitting this connection to exist, I should like to see the gentleman from Coles, or any other gentleman, undertake to show that there is any harm in it. What can there be in such a connection, that the people of Illinois are willing to pay their money to get a peep into? By a reference to the tenth section of the Bank charter, any gentleman can see that the framers of the act contemplated the holding of stock in the institutions of other cor-

porations. Why, then, is it, when neither law nor justice forbids it, that we are asked to spend our time and money, in inquiring into its truth?

The next charge, in the order of time, is, that some officer, director, clerk or servant of the Bank, has been required to take an oath of secrecy in relation to the affairs of said Bank. Now, I do not know whether this be true or false—neither do I believe any honest man cares. I know that the seventh section of the charter expressly guarantees to the Bank the right of making, under certain restrictions, such by-laws as it may think fit; and I further know that the requiring an oath of secrecy would not transcend those restrictions. What, then, if the Bank has chosen to exercise this right? Who can it injure? Does not every merchant have his secret mark? and who is ever silly enough to complain of it? I presume if the Bank does require any such oath of secrecy, it is done through a motive of delicacy to those individuals who deal with it. Why, sir, not many days since, one gentleman upon this floor, who, by the way, I have no doubt is now ready to join this hue and cry against the Bank, indulged in a philippic against one of the Bank officials, because, as he said, he had *divulged a secret.*

Immediately following this last charge, there are several insinuations in the resolution, which

are too silly to require any sort of notice, were it not for the fact, that they conclude by saying, *"to the great injury of the people at large."* In answer to this I would say that it is strange enough that the people are suffering these "great injuries," and yet are not sensible of it! Singular indeed that the people should be writhing under oppression and injury, and yet not one among them to be found to raise the voice of complaint. If the Bank be inflicting injury upon the people, why is it that not a single petition is presented to this body on the subject? If the Bank really be a grievance, why is it that no one of the real people is found to ask redress of it? The truth is, no such oppression exists. If it did, our people would groan with memorials and petitions, and we would not be permitted to rest day or night till we had put it down. The people know their rights, and they are never slow to assert and maintain them, when they are invaded. Let them call for an investigation, and I shall ever stand ready to respond to the call. But they have made no such call. I make the assertion boldly, and without fear of contradiction, that no man, who does not hold an office, or does not aspire to one, has ever found any fault of the Bank. It has doubled the prices of the products of their farms, and filled their pockets with a sound circulating medium, and they are

all well pleased with its operations. No, sir, it is the politician who is the first to sound the alarm (which, by the way, is a false one). It is he who, by these unholy means, is endeavoring to blow up a storm that he may ride upon and direct. It is he, and he alone, that here proposes to spend thousands of the people's public treasure, for no other advantage to them than to make valueless in their pockets the reward of their industry. Mr. Chairman, this work is exclusively the work of politicians; a set of men who have interests aside from the interests of the people, and who, to say the most of them, are, taken as a mass, at least one long step removed from honest men. I say this with the greater freedom because, being a politician myself, none can regard it as personal.

Again, it is charged, or rather insinuated, that officers of the Bank have loaned money at usurious rates of interest. Suppose this to be true, are we to send a committee of this House to enquire into it? Suppose the committee should find it true, can they redress the injured individuals? Assuredly not. If any individual had been injured in this way, is there not an ample remedy to be found in the laws of the land? Does the gentleman from Coles know that there is a statute standing in full force, making it highly penal, for an individual to loan money at a

higher rate of interest than twelve per cent? If he does not he is too ignorant to be placed at the head of the committee which his resolution proposes; and if he does, his neglect to mention it shows him to be too uncandid to merit the respect or confidence of any one.

But besides all this, if the Bank were struck from existence, could not the owners of the capital still loan it usuriously as well as now? Whatever the Bank, or its officers, may have done, I know that usurious transactions were much more frequent and enormous before the commencement of its operations than they have ever been since.

The next insinuation is, that the Bank has refused specie payments. This, if true, is a violation of the charter. But there is not the least probability of its truth; because, if such had been the fact, the individual to whom payment was refused would have had an interest in making it public, by suing for the damages to which the charter entitles him. Yet no such thing has been done; and the strong presumption is, that the insinuation is false and groundless.

From this to the end of the resolution, there is nothing that merits attention—I therefore drop the particular examination of it.

By a general view of the resolution, it will be seen that a principal object of the committee is

to examine into, and ferret out, a mass of corruption, supposed to have been committed by the commissioners who apportioned the stock of the Bank. I believe it is universally understood and acknowledged that all men will ever act correctly unless they have a motive to do otherwise. If this be true, we can only suppose that the commissioners acted corruptly, by also supposing that they were bribed to do so. Taking this view of the subject, I would ask if the Bank is likely to find it more difficult to bribe the committee of seven, which we are about to appoint, than it may have found it to bribe the commissioners?

(Here Mr. Linder called to order. The Chair decided that Mr. Lincoln was not out of order. Mr. Linder appealed to the House; but before the question was put, withdrew his appeal, saying he preferred to let the gentleman go on; he thought he would break his own neck. Mr. Lincoln proceeded):

Another *gracious condescension;* I acknowledge it with gratitude. I know I was not out of order; and I know every sensible man in the House knows it. I was not saying that the gentleman from Coles could not (?) be bribed, nor, on the other hand, will I say he could not. In that particular I leave him where I found him. I was only endeavoring to show that there was

at least as great a probability of *any* seven members that could be selected from this House being bribed to act corruptly, as there was that the twenty-four commissioners had been so bribed. By a reference to the ninth section of the Bank charter, it will be seen that those commissioners were John Tilson, Robert K. McLaughlin, Daniel Wann, A. G. S. Wight, John C. Riley, W. H. Davidson, Edward M. Wilson, Edward L. Pierson, Robert R. Green, Ezra Baker, Aquilla Wren, John Taylor, Samuel C. Christy, Edmund Roberts, Benjamin Godfrey, Thomas Mather, A. M. Jenkins, W. Linn, W. S. Gilman, Charles Prentice, Richard I. Hamilton, A. H. Buckner, W. F. Thornton and Edmund D. Taylor.

These are twenty-four of the most respectable men in the State. Probably no twenty-four men could be selected in the State with whom the people are better acquainted, or in whose honor and integrity they would more readily place confidence. And I now repeat that there is less probability that those men have been bribed and corrupted than that *any* seven men, or rather any *six* men, that could be selected from the members of this House, might be so bribed and corrupted; even though they were headed and led on by "decided superiority" himself.

In all seriousness, I ask every reasonable man

if an issue be joined by these twenty-four commissioners on the one part, and *any* other seven men on the other part, and the whole depend upon the honor and integrity of the contending parties, to which party would the greatest degree of credit be due? Again: Another consideration is, that we have no right to make the examination. What I shall say upon this head, I design exclusively for the law-loving and law-abiding part of the House. To those who claim omnipotence for the Legislature, and who in the plentitude of their assumed powers are disposed to disregard the Constitution, law, good faith, moral right, and everything else, I have not a word to say. But to the law-abiding part I say, examine the Bank charter, go examine the Constitution; go examine the acts that the General Assembly of this State has passed, and you will find just as much authority given in each and every of them, to compel the Bank to bring its coffers to this hall and to pour their contents upon this floor, as to compel it to submit to this examination which this resolution proposes. Why, sir, the gentleman from Coles, the mover of this resolution, very lately denied on this floor that the Legislature had any right to repeal, or otherwise meddle with its own acts, when those acts were made in the nature of contracts, and had been accepted and acted on by other parties.

Now I ask, if this resolution does not propose, for this House alone, to do what he, but the other day, denied the right of the whole Legislature to do? He must either abandon the position he then took or he must now vote against his own resolution. It is no difference to me, and I presume but little to any one else, which he does.

I am by no means the special advocate of the Bank. I have long thought that it would be well for it to report its condition to the General Assembly, and that cases might occur, when it might be proper to make an examination of its affairs by a committee. Accordingly, during the last session, while a bill supplemental to the Bank charter was pending before the House, I offered an amendment to the same, in these words: "The said corporation shall, at the next session of the General Assembly, and at each subsequent General Session, during the existence of its charter, report to the same the amount of debts due *from* said corporation; the amount of debts due *to* the same; the amount of specie in its vaults, and an account of all lands then owned by the same, and the amount for which such lands have been taken; and moreover, if said corporation shall at any time neglect or refuse to submit its books, papers, and all and everything necessary for a full and fair examination of its affairs, to any person or persons appointed by the General As-

sembly, for the purpose of making such examination, the said corporation shall forfeit its charter."

This amendment was negatived by a vote of 34 to 15. Eleven of the 34 who voted against it are now members of this House; and though it would be out of order to call their names, I hope they will all recollect themselves, and not vote for this examination to be made without authority, inasmuch as they refused to receive the authority when it was in their power to do so.

I have said that cases might occur when an examination might be proper; but I do not believe any such case has now occurred; and if it has, I should still be opposed to making an examination without legal authority. I am opposed to encouraging that lawless and mobocratic spirit, whether in relation to the Bank or anything else, which is already abroad in the land; and is spreading with rapid and fearful impetuosity to the ultimate overthrow of every institution, of even moral principle, in which persons and property have hitherto found security.

But supposing we had the authority, I would ask what good can result from the examination? Can we declare the Bank unconstitutional, and compel it to desist from the abuses of its power, provided we find such abuses to exist? Can we

repair the injuries which it may have done to individuals? Most certainly we can do none of these things. Why, then, shall we spend the public money in such employment? O, say the examiners, we can injure the credit of the Bank, if nothing else. Please tell me, gentlemen, who will suffer most by that? You cannot injure, to any extent, the stockholders. They are men of wealth—of large capital; and consequently, beyond the power of malice. But by injuring the credit of the Bank you will depreciate the value of its paper in the hands of the honest and unsuspecting farmer and mechanic, and that is all you can do. But suppose you could affect your whole purpose; suppose you could wipe the Bank from existence, which is the grand *ultimatum* of the project, what would be the consequence? Why, sir, we should spend several thousand dollars of the public treasure in the operation, annihilate the currency of the State; render valueless in the hands of our people that reward of their former labors; and finally, be once more under the comfortable obligation of paying the Wiggins' loan, principal and interest.

## Address before the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois, January 27, 1837[1]

AS A SUBJECT for the remarks of the evening, "The perpetuation of our political institutions" is selected.

In the great journal of things happening under the sun, we, the American people, find our account running under date of the nineteenth century of the Christian era. We find ourselves in the peaceful possession of the fairest portion of the earth as regards extent of territory, fertility of soil, and salubrity of climate. We find ourselves under the government of a system of political institutions conducing more essentially to the ends of civil and religious liberty than any of which the history of former times tells us. We, when mounting the stage of existence, found ourselves the legal inheritors of these fundamental blessings. We toiled not in the acquirement or establishment of them; they are a legacy

[1] In the autumn of 1836, Lincoln, in conjunction with a few prominent young men, formed a young men's lyceum for mutual improvement. His speech delivered before this club is one of the earliest preserved to us. It appeared in the "Sangamon Journal" for February 3, 1838.

bequeathed us by a once hardy, brave, and patriotic, but now lamented and departed, race of ancestors. Theirs was the task (and nobly they performed it) to possess themselves, and through themselves us, of this goodly land, and to uprear upon its hills and its valleys a political edifice of liberty and equal rights; 'tis ours only to transmit these—the former unprofaned by the foot of an invader, the latter undecayed by the lapse of time and untorn by usurpation—to the latest generation that fate shall permit the world to know. This task of gratitude to our fathers, justice to ourselves, duty to posterity, and love for our species in general, all imperatively require us faithfully to perform.

How then shall we perform it? At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? By what means shall we fortify against it? Shall we expect some transatlantic military giant to step the ocean and crush us at a blow? Never! All the armies of Europe, Asia, and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the earth (our own excepted) in their military chest, with a Bonaparte for a commander, could not by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track on the Blue Ridge in a trial of a thousand years.

At what point, then, is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, If it ever reach us it must spring up amongst us; it cannot come

from abroad. If destruction be our lot we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen we must live through all time, or die by suicide.

I hope I am over wary; but if I am not, there is even now something of ill omen amongst us. I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country—the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions in lieu of the sober judgment of courts, and the worse than savage mobs for the executive ministers of justice. This disposition is awfully fearful in any community; and that it now exists in ours, though grating to our feelings to admit, it would be a violation of truth and an insult to our intelligence to deny. Accounts of outrages committed by mobs form the every-day news of the times. They have pervaded the country from New England to Louisiana; they are neither peculiar to the eternal snows of the former nor the burning suns of the latter; they are not the creature of climate, neither are they confined to the slaveholding or the non-slaveholding States. Alike they spring up among the pleasure-hunting masters of Southern slaves, and the order-loving citizens of the land of steady habits. Whatever then their cause may be, it is common to the whole country.

It would be tedious as well as useless to re-

count the horrors of all of them. Those happening in the State of Mississippi and at St. Louis are perhaps the most dangerous in example and revolting to humanity. In the Mississippi case they first commenced by hanging the regular gamblers—a set of men certainly not following for a livelihood a very useful or very honest occupation, but one which, so far from being forbidden by the laws, was actually licensed by an act of the Legislature passed but a single year before. Next, negroes suspected of conspiring to raise an insurrection were caught up and hanged in all parts of the State; then, white men supposed to be leagued with the negroes; and finally, strangers from neighboring States, going thither on business, were in many instances subjected to the same fate. Thus went on this process of hanging, from gamblers to negroes, from negroes to white citizens, and from these to strangers, till dead men were seen literally dangling from the boughs of trees upon every roadside, and in numbers almost sufficient to rival the native Spanish moss of the country as a drapery of the forest.

Turn, then, to that horror-striking scene at St. Louis. A single victim only was sacrificed there. This story is very short, and is perhaps the most highly tragic of anything of its length that has ever been witnessed in real life. A

mulatto man by the name of McIntosh was seized in the street, dragged to the suburbs of the city, chained to a tree, and actually burned to death; and all within a single hour from the time he had been a freeman attending to his own business and at peace with the world.

Such are the effects of mob law, and such are the scenes becoming more and more frequent in this land so lately famed for love of law and order, and the stories of which have even now grown too familiar to attract anything more than an idle remark.

But you are perhaps ready to ask, "What has this to do with the perpetuation of our political institutions?" I answer, "It has much to do with it." Its direct consequences are, comparatively speaking, but a small evil, and much of its danger consists in the proneness of our minds to regard its direct as its only consequences. Abstractly considered, the hanging of the gamblers at Vicksburg was of but little consequence. They constitute a portion of population that is worse than useless in any community; and their death, if no pernicious example be set by it, is never matter of reasonable regret with any one. If they were annually swept from the stage of existence by the plague or smallpox, honest men would perhaps be much profited by the operation. Similar, too, is the correct reasoning in

regard to the burning of the negro at St. Louis. He had forfeited his life by the perpetration of an outrageous murder upon one of the most worthy and respectable citizens of the city, and had he not died as he did, he must have died by the sentence of the law in a very short time afterward. As to him alone, it was as well the way it was as it could otherwise have been. But the example in either case was fearful. When men take it in their heads to-day to hang gamblers or burn murderers, they should recollect that in the confusion usually attending such transactions they will be as likely to hang or burn some one who is neither a gambler nor a murderer as one who is, and that, acting upon the example they set, the mob of to-morrow may, and probably will, hang or burn some of them by the very same mistake. And not only so; the innocent, those who have ever set their faces against violations of law in every shape, alike with the guilty fall victims to the ravages of mob law; and thus it goes up, step by step, till all the walls erected for the defense of the persons and property of individuals are trodden down and disregarded. But all this, even, is not the full extent of the evil. By such examples, by instances of the perpetrators of such acts going unpunished, the lawless in spirit are encouraged to become lawless in practice; and having been

used to no restraint but dread of punishment, they thus become absolutely unrestrained. Having ever regarded government as their deadliest bane, they make a jubilee of the suspension of its operations, and pray for nothing so much as its total annihilation. While, on the other hand, good men, men who love tranquillity, who desire to abide by the laws and enjoy their benefits, who would gladly spill their blood in the defense of their country, seeing their property destroyed, their families insulted, and their lives endangered, their persons injured, and seeing nothing in prospect that forebodes a change for the better, become tired of and disgusted with a government that offers them no protection, and are not much averse to a change in which they imagine they have nothing to lose. Thus, then, by the operation of this mobocratic spirit which all must admit is now abroad in the land, the strongest bulwark of any government, and particularly of those constituted like ours, may effectually be broken down and destroyed—I mean the attachment of the people. Whenever this effect shall be produced among us; whenever the vicious portion of population shall be permitted to gather in bands of hundreds and thousands, and burn churches, ravage and rob provision-stores, throw printing-presses into rivers, shoot editors, and hang and burn ob-

noxious persons at pleasure and with impunity, depend on it, this government cannot last. By such things the feelings of the best citizens will become more or less alienated from it, and thus it will be left without friends, or with too few, and those few too weak to make their friendship effectual. At such a time, and under such circumstances, men of sufficient talent and ambition will not be wanting to seize the opportunity, strike the blow, and overturn that fair fabric which for the last half century has been the fondest hope of the lovers of freedom throughout the world.

I know the American people are much attached to their government; I know they would suffer much for its sake; I know they would endure evils long and patiently before they would ever think of exchanging it for another—yet, notwithstanding all this, if the laws be continually despised and disregarded, if their rights to be secure in their persons and property are held by no better tenure than the caprice of a mob, the alienation of their affections from the government is the natural consequence; and to that, sooner or later, it must come.

Here, then, is one point at which danger may be expected.

The question recurs, "How shall we fortify against it?" The answer is simple. Let every

American, every lover of liberty, every well-wisher to his posterity swear by the blood of the Revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and laws let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor—let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, spelling-books, and in almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the political religion of the nation; and let the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the grave and the gay of all sexes and tongues and colors and conditions, sacrifice unceasingly upon its altars.

While ever a state of feeling such as this shall universally or even very generally prevail throughout the nation, vain will be every effort, and fruitless every attempt, to subvert our national freedom.

When I so pressingly urge a strict observance of all the laws, let me not be understood as saying there are no bad laws, or that grievances may not arise for the redress of which no legal provisions have been made. I mean to say no such thing. But I do mean to say that although bad laws, if they exist, should be repealed as soon as possible, still, while they continue in force, for the sake of example they should be religiously observed. So also in unprovided cases. If such arise, let proper legal provisions be made for them with the least possible delay, but till then let them, if not too intolerable, be borne with.

There is no grievance that is a fit object of redress by mob law. In any case that may arise, as, for instance, the promulgation of abolitionism, one of two positions is necessarily true—that is, the thing is right within itself, and therefore deserves the protection of all law and all good citizens, or it is wrong, and therefore proper to be prohibited by legal enactments; and in neither case is the interposition of mob law either necessary, justifiable, or excusable.

But it may be asked, "Why suppose danger to our political institutions? Have we not preserved them for more than fifty years? And why may we not for fifty times as long?"

We hope there is no sufficient reason. We

hope all danger may be overcome; but to conclude that no danger may ever arise would itself be extremely dangerous. There are now, and will hereafter be, many causes, dangerous in their tendency, which have not existed heretofore, and which are not too insignificant to merit attention. That our government should have been maintained in its original form, from its establishment until now, is not much to be wondered at. It had many props to support it through that period, which now are decayed and crumbled away. Through that period it was felt by all to be an undecided experiment; now it is understood to be a successful one. Then, all that sought celebrity and fame and distinction expected to find them in the success of that experiment. Their all was staked upon it; their destiny was inseparably linked with it. Their ambition aspired to display before an admiring world a practical demonstration of the truth of a proposition which had hitherto been considered at best no better than problematical—namely, the capability of a people to govern themselves. If they succeeded they were to be immortalized; their names were to be transferred to counties, and cities, and rivers, and mountains; and to be revered and sung, toasted through all time. If they failed, they were to be called knaves, and fools, and fanatics for a fleet-

ing hour; then to sink and be forgotten. They succeeded. The experiment is successful, and thousands have won their deathless names in making it so. But the game is caught; and I believe it is true that with the catching end the pleasures of the chase. This field of glory is harvested, and the crop is already appropriated. But new reapers will arise, and they too will seek a field. It is to deny what the history of the world tells us is true, to suppose that men of ambition and talents will not continue to spring up amongst us. And when they do, they will as naturally seek the gratification of their ruling passion as others have done before them. The question then is, Can that gratification be found in supporting and maintaining an edifice that has been erected by others? Most certainly it cannot. Many great and good men, sufficiently qualified for any task they should undertake, may ever be found whose ambition would aspire to nothing beyond a seat in Congress, a gubernatorial or a presidential chair; but such belong not to the family of the lion, or the tribe of the eagle. What! think you these places would satisfy an Alexander, a Cæsar, or a Napoleon? Never! Towering genius disdains a beaten path. It seeks regions hitherto unexplored. It sees no distinction in adding story to story upon the monuments of fame erected

to the memory of others. It denies that it is glory enough to serve under any chief. It scorns to tread in the footsteps of any predecessor, however illustrious. It thirsts and burns for distinction; and if possible, it will have it, whether at the expense of emancipating slaves or enslaving freemen. Is it unreasonable, then, to expect that some man possessed of the loftiest genius, coupled with ambition sufficient to push it to its utmost stretch, will at some time spring up among us? And when such an one does, it will require the people to be united with each other, attached to the government and laws, and generally intelligent, to successfully frustrate his designs.

Distinction will be his paramount object, and although he would as willingly, perhaps more so, acquire it by doing good as harm, yet, that opportunity being past, and nothing left to be done in the way of building up, he would set boldly to the task of pulling down.

Here then is a probable case, highly dangerous, and such an one as could not have well existed heretofore.

Another reason which once was, but which, to the same extent, is now no more, has done much in maintaining our institutions thus far. I mean the powerful influence which the interesting scenes of the Revolution had upon the passions

of the people as distinguished from their judgment. By this influence, the jealousy, envy, and avarice incident to our nature, and so common to a state of peace, prosperity, and conscious strength, were for the time in a great measure smothered and rendered inactive, while the deep-rooted principles of hate, and the powerful motive of revenge, instead of being turned against each other, were directed exclusively against the British nation. And thus, from the force of circumstances, the basest principles of our nature were either made to lie dormant, or to become the active agents in the advancement of the noblest of causes—that of establishing and maintaining civil and religious liberty.

But this state of feeling must fade, is fading, had faded, with the circumstances that produced it.

I do not mean to say that the scenes of the Revolution are now or ever will be entirely forgotten, but that, like everything else, they must fade upon the memory of the world, and grow more and more dim by the lapse of time. In history, we hope, they will be read of, and recounted, so long as the Bible shall be read; but even granting that they will, their influence cannot be what it heretofore has been. Even then they cannot be so universally known nor so

vividly felt as they were by the generation just gone to rest. At the close of that struggle, nearly every adult male had been a participator in some of its scenes. The consequence was that of those scenes, in the form of a husband, a father, a son, or a brother, a living history was to be found in every family—a history bearing the indubitable testimonies of its own authenticity, in the limbs mangled, in the scars of wounds received, in the midst of the very scenes related—a history, too, that could be read and understood alike by all, the wise and the ignorant, the learned and the unlearned. But those histories are gone. They can be read no more forever. They were a fortress of strength; but what invading foeman could never do, the silent artillery of time has done—the leveling of its walls. They are gone. They were a forest of giant oaks; but the all-resistless hurricane has swept over them, and left only here and there a lonely trunk, despoiled of its verdure, shorn of its foliage, unshading and unshaded, to murmur in a few more gentle breezes, and to combat with its mutilated limbs a few more ruder storms, then to sink and be no more.

They were pillars of the temple of liberty; and now that they have crumbled away that temple must fall unless we, their descendants, supply their places with other pillars, hewn from the

solid quarry of sober reason. Passion has helped us, but can do so no more. It will in future be our enemy. Reason—cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason—must furnish all the materials for our future support and defense. Let those materials be molded into general intelligence, sound morality, and, in particular, a reverence for the Constitution and laws; and that we improved to the last, that we remained free to the last, that we revered his name to the last, that during his long sleep we permitted no hostile foot to pass over or desecrate his resting-place, shall be that which to learn the last trump shall awaken our Washington.

Upon these let the proud fabric of freedom rest, as the rock of its basis; and as truly as has been said of the only greater institution, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

## Protest in the Illinois Legislature on the Subject of Slavery[1]

March 3, 1837.

THE FOLLOWING protest was presented to the House, which was read and ordered to be spread on the journals, to-wit:

Resolutions upon the subject of domestic slavery having passed both branches of the General Assembly at its present session, the undersigned hereby protest against the passage of the same.

They believe that the institution of slavery is

[1] North and South were beginning to be much exercised over the question of the slave. In 1837 Illinois witnessed the killing of an anti-slavery editor, Elijah Lovejoy. Abolition societies were formed in various quarters. The Illinois Assembly disapproved of these societies and their influence. On March 3rd it passed the following resolutions:

"Resolved by the General Assembly of the State of Illinois:

"That we highly disapprove of the formation of Abolition societies, and of the doctrines promulgated by them.

"That the right of property in slaves is sacred to the slave-holding States by the Federal Constitution, and that they cannot be deprived of that right without their consent.

"That the General Government cannot abolish slavery in the District of Columbia against the consent of the citizens of said District, without a manifest breach of good faith.

"That the governor be requested to transmit to the States of

founded on both injustice and bad policy, but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than abate its evils.

They believe that the Congress of the United States has no power under the Constitution to interfere with the institution of slavery in the different States.

They believe that the Congress of the United States has the power, under the Constitution, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, but that the power ought not to be exercised, unless at the request of the people of the District.

The difference between these opinions and those contained in the said resolutions is their reason for entering this protest.

DAN STONE,
A. LINCOLN,
*Representatives from the County of Sangamon.*

## LETTER TO MISS MARY OWENS

SPRINGFIELD, May 7, 1837.

MISS MARY S. OWENS.

*Friend Mary:* I have commenced two let-

Virginia, Alabama, Mississippi, New York and Connecticut a copy of the foregoing report and resolutions."

It was against these resolutions that Lincoln and Stone (the only other man in Assembly who had the courage to concur) protested. In W. E. Curtis's opinion this was "the first formal declaration against the system of slavery that was made in any legislative body in the United States, at least west of the Hudson River."

ters to send you before this, both of which displeased me before I got half done, and so I tore them up. The first I thought was not serious enough, and the second was on the other extreme. I shall send this, turn out as it may.

This thing of living in Springfield is rather a dull business, after all; at least it is to me. I am quite as lonesome here as I ever was anywhere in my life. I have been spoken to by but one woman since I have been here, and should not have been by her if she could have avoided it. I've never been to church yet, and probably shall not be soon. I stay away because I am conscious I should not know how to behave myself.

I am often thinking of what we said about your coming to live at Springfield. I am afraid you would not be satisfied. There is a great deal of flourishing about in carriages here, which it would be your doom to see without sharing it. You would have to be poor, without the means of hiding your poverty. Do you believe you could bear that patiently? Whatever woman may cast her lot with mine, should any ever do so, it is my intention to do all in my power to make her happy and contented; and there is nothing I can imagine that would make me more unhappy than to fail in the effort. I know I should be much happier with you than

the way I am, provided I saw no signs of discontent in you. What you have said to me may have been in the way of jest, or I may have misunderstood it. If so, then let it be forgotten; if otherwise, I much wish you would think seriously before you decide. What I have said I will most positively abide by, provided you wish it. My opinion is that you had better not do it. You have not been accustomed to hardship, and it may be more severe than you now imagine. I know you are capable of thinking correctly on any subject, and if you deliberate maturely upon this before you decide, then I am willing to abide your decision.

You must write me a good long letter after you get this. You have nothing else to do, and though it might not seem interesting to you after you had written it, it would be a good deal of company to me in this "busy wilderness." Tell your sister I don't want to hear any more about selling out and moving. That gives me the "hypo" whenever I think of it. Yours, etc.,

LINCOLN.

## *Letter to John Bennett

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., Aug. 5, 1837.

JOHN BENNETT, ESQ.

*Dear Sir:* Mr. Edwards tells me you wish to know whether the act to which your town in-

corporation provision was attached passed into a law. It did. You can organize under the general incorporation law as soon as you choose. I also tacked a provision on to a fellow's bill to authorize the re-location of the road from Salem down to your town, but I am not certain whether or not the bill passed, neither do I suppose I can ascertain before the law will be published, if it is a law. Bowling Greene, Bennett Abell, and yourself are appointed to make the change.

No news. No excitement except a little about the election of Monday next. I suppose of course our friend, Dr. Henry, stands no chance in your "diggings."

Your friend and humble servant,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO MISS MARY OWENS

SPRINGFIELD, August 16, 1837.

*Friend Mary:* You will no doubt think it rather strange that I should write you a letter on the same day on which we parted, and I can only account for it by supposing that seeing you lately makes me think of you more than usual; while at our late meeting we had but few expressions of thoughts. You must know that I cannot see you or think of you with entire indifference; and yet it may be that you are mis-

taken in regard to what my real feelings toward you are. If I knew you were not, I should not trouble you with this letter. Perhaps any other man would know enough without further information; but I consider it my peculiar right to plead ignorance, and your bounden duty to allow the plea. I want in all cases to do right, and most particularly so in all cases with women. I want at this particular time, more than anything else, to do right with you; and if I knew it would be doing right, as I rather suspect it would, to let you alone, I would do it. And for the purpose of making the matter as plain as possible, I now say that you can now drop the subject, dismiss your thoughts (if you ever had any) from me forever, and leave this letter unanswered, without calling forth one accusing murmur from me. And I will even go further, and say that if it will add anything to your comfort or peace of mind to do so, it is my sincere wish that you should. Do not understand by this that I wish to cut your acquaintance. I mean no such thing. What I do wish is that our further acquaintance shall depend upon yourself. If such further acquaintance would contribute nothing to your happiness, I am sure it would not to mine. If you feel yourself in any degree bound to me, I am now willing to release you, provided you wish it; while, on the

other hand, I am willing and even anxious to bind you faster, if I can be convinced that it will, in any considerable degree, add to your happiness. This, indeed, is the whole question with me. Nothing would make me more miserable than to believe you miserable — nothing more happy than to know you were so.

In what I have now said, I think I cannot be misunderstood, and to make myself understood is the only object of this letter.

If it suits you best to not answer this, farewell. A long life and a merry one attend you. But if you conclude to write back, speak as plainly as I do. There can be neither harm nor danger in saying to me anything you think, just in the manner you think it.

My respects to your sister. Your friend,

LINCOLN.

## *HAND BILL TO THE SANGAMON JOURNAL, August 19, 1837

### TO THE PEOPLE

In accordance with our determination, as expressed last week, we present to the reader the articles which were published in hand-bill form, in reference to the case of the heirs of Joseph Anderson vs. James Adams. These articles can

now be read, uninfluenced by personal or party feeling, and with the sole motive of learning the truth. When that is done, the reader can pass his own judgment on the matters at issue.

We only regret in this case, that the publications were not made some weeks before the election. Such a course might have prevented the expressions of regret, which have often been heard since, from different individuals, on account of the disposition they made of their votes.

## TO THE PUBLIC

It is well known to most of you, that there is existing at this time, considerable excitement in regard to Gen. Adams's titles to certain tracts of land, and the manner in which he acquired them. As I understand, the General charges that the whole has been gotten up by a knot of lawyers to injure his election; and as I am one of the knot to which he refers—and as I happen to be in possession of facts connected with the matter, I will, in as brief a manner as possible, make a statement of them, together with the means by which I arrived at the knowledge of them.

Sometime in May or June last, a widow woman, by the name of Anderson, and her son, who resides in Fulton county, came to Spring-

field, for the purpose, as they said, of selling a ten acre lot of ground lying near town, which they claimed as the property of the deceased husband and father.

When they reached town they found the land was claimed by Gen. Adams. John T. Stuart and myself were employed to look into the matter, and if it was thought we could do so with any prospect of success, to commence a suit for the land. I went immediately to the recorder's office to examine Adams's title, and found that the land had been entered by one Dixon, deeded by Dixon to Thomas, by Thomas to one Miller, and by Miller to Gen. Adams. The oldest of these three deeds was about ten or eleven years old, and the latest more than five, all recorded at the same time, and that within less than one year. This I thought a suspicious circumstance, and I was thereby induced to examine the deeds very closely, with a view to the discovery of some defect by which to overturn the title, being almost convinced then it was founded in fraud. I finally discovered that in the deed from Thomas to Miller, although Miller's name stood in a sort of marginal note on the record book, it was nowhere in the deed itself. I told the fact to Talbott, the recorder, and proposed to him that he should go to Gen. Adams's and get the original deed, and compare it with the re-

cord, and thereby ascertain whether the defect was in the original, or there was merely an error in the recording. As Talbott afterwards told me, he went to the General's, but not finding him at home, got the deed from his son, which, when compared with the record, proved what we had discovered was merely an error of the recorder. After Mr. Talbott corrected the record, he brought the original to our office, as I then thought and think yet, to show us that it was right. When he came into the room he handed the deed to me, remarking that the fault was all his own. On opening it, another paper fell out of it, which on examination, proved to be an assignment of a judgment in the Circuit Court of Sangamon County from Joseph Anderson, the late husband of the widow above named, to James Adams, the judgment being in favor of said Anderson against one Joseph Miller. Knowing that this judgment had some connection with the land affair, I immediately took a copy of it, which is word for word, letter for letter and cross for cross as follows:

"Joseph Anderson, *vs.* Joseph Miller.

Judgment in Sangamon Circuit Court against Joseph Miller obtained on a note originally 25 dolls and interest thereon accrued.

I assign all my right, title and interest to James Adams which is in consideration of a debt I owe said Adams.

his
JOSEPH X ANDERSON.
mark."

May 10th, 1827.

As the copy shows, it bore date May 10, 1827; although the judgment assigned by it was not obtained until the October afterwards, as may be seen by any one on the records of the Circuit Court. Two other strange circumstances attended it which cannot be represented by a copy. One of them was, that the date "1827" had first been made "1837" and without the figure "3" being fully obliterated, the figure "2" had afterwards been made on top of it; the other was that, although the date was ten years old, the writing on it, from the freshness of its appearance, was thought by many, and I believe by all who saw it, not to be more than a week old. The paper on which it was written had a very old appearance; and there were some old figures on the back of it which made the freshness of the writing on the face of it, much more striking than I suppose it otherwise might have been. The reader's curiosity is no doubt excited to know what connection this assignment had with the

land in question. The story is this: Dixon sold and deeded the land to Thomas:—Thomas sold it to Anderson; but before he gave a deed, Anderson sold it to Miller, and took Miller's note for the purchase money.— When this note became due, Anderson sued Miller on it, and Miller procured an injunction from the Court of Chancery to stay the collection of the money until he should get a deed for the land. Gen. Adams was employed as an attorney by Anderson in this chancery suit, and at the October term, 1827, the injunction was dissolved, and a judgment given in favor of Anderson against Miller; and it was provided that Thomas was to execute a deed for the land in favor of Miller, and deliver it to Gen. Adams, to be held up by him till Miller paid the judgment, and then to deliver it to him. Miller left the county without paying the judgment. Anderson moved to Fulton county, where he has since died. When the widow came to Springfield last May or June, as before mentioned, and found the land deeded to Gen. Adams by Miller, she was naturally led to inquire why the money due upon the judgment had not been sent to them, inasmuch as he, Gen. Adams, had no authority to deliver Thomas's deed to Miller until the money was paid. Then it was the General told her, or perhaps her son, who came with her, that Anderson,

in his lifetime, *had assigned the judgment to him,* Gen. Adams. I am now told that the General is exhibiting an assignment of the same judgment bearing date "1828;" and in other respects differing from the one described; and that he is asserting that no such assignment as the one copied by me ever existed; or if there did, it was forged between Talbott and the lawyers, and slipped into his papers for the purpose of injuring him. Now, I can only say that I know precisely such a one did exist, and that Ben. Talbott, Wm. Butler, C. R. Matheny, John T. Stuart, Judge Logan, Robert Irwin, P. C. Canedy and S. M. Tinsley, all saw and examined it, and that at least one half of them will swear that *IT WAS IN GENERAL ADAMS'S HANDWRITING!!* And further, I know that Talbott will swear that he got it out of the General's possession, and returned it into his possession again. The assignment which the General is now exhibiting purports to have been by Anderson in writing. The one I copied was signed with a cross.

I am told that Gen. Neale says that he will swear, that he heard Gen. Adams tell young Anderson that the assignment made by his father was signed with a cross.

The above are facts, as stated. I leave them without comment. I have given the names of

persons who have knowledge of these facts, in order that any one who chooses may call on them and ascertain how far they will corroborate my statements. I have only made these statements because I am known by many to be one of the individuals against whom the charge of forging the assignment and slipping it into the General's papers, has been made; and because our silence might be construed into a confession of its truth. I shall not subscribe my name; but I hereby authorize the editor of the 'Journal' to give it up to any one that may call for it."

["It having been stated this morning that the subscriber had refused to give the name of the author of the hand-bill above referred to (which statement is not true): to save any farther remarks on this subject, I now state that A. Lincoln, Esq., is the author of the hand-bill in question. SIMEON FRANCIS.]



Early Home of Abraham Lincoln
Reproduced from a Rare Engraving.

*Thomas Lincoln Built this Cabin in Elizabethtown, Hardin County, Ky., and Moved into it when his Son, Abraham, was still an Infant. The Lincolns lived there till Abraham was seven years old, when they took up Residence in Indiana.*

## *Lincoln and Talbott Reply to Gen. Adams, Sept. 9, 1837

"Sangamon Journal," Springfield, Ill., Sept. 9, 1837.

IN THE "Republican" of this morning a publication of Gen. Adams's appears, in which my name is used quite unreservedly. For this I thank the General. I thank him because it gives me an opportunity, without appearing obtrusive, of explaining a part of a former publication of mine, which appears to me to have been misunderstood by many.

In the former publication alluded to, I stated, in substance, that Mr. Talbott got a deed from a son of Gen. Adams's for the purpose of correcting a mistake that had occurred on the record of the said deed in the recorder's office—that he corrected the record, and brought the deed and handed it to me—and that, on opening the deed, another paper, being the assignment of a judgment, *fell out* of it. This statement Gen. Adams and the editor of the "Republican," have seized upon as a most palpable evidence of fabrication and falsehood. They set themselves gravely about proving that the assignment could

not have been in the deed when Talbott got it from young Adams, as he, Talbott, would have seen it when he opened the deed to correct the record. Now, the truth is, Talbott *did* see the assignment when he opened the deed, or at least he told me he did on the same day; and I only omitted to say so, in my former publication, because it was a matter of such palpable and necessary inference. I had stated that Talbott had corrected the record by the deed; and of course he must have opened it; and, just as the General and his friends argue, must have seen the assignment. I omitted to state the fact of Talbott's seeing the assignment, because its existence was so necessarily connected with other facts which I did state, that I thought the greatest dunce could not but understand it. Did I say Talbott had not seen it? Did I say *anything* that was *inconsistent* with his having seen it before? Most certainly I did neither; and if I did not, what becomes of the argument? These logical gentlemen cannot sustain their argument only by assuming that I *did say negatively* everything that I *did not* say affirmatively; and upon the same assumption, we may expect to find the General, if a little harder pressed for argument, saying that I said Talbott came to our office with his head downward, not that I actually

said so, but because I omitted to say he came feet downward.

In his publication to-day, the General produces the affidavit of Reuben Radford, in which it is said that Talbott told Radford that he did not find the assignment in the deed, in the recording of which the error was omitted, but that he found it wrapped in another paper in the recorder's office, upon which statement the General comments, as follows, to-wit:—"If it be true as stated by Talbott to Radford, that he found the assignment wrapped up in another paper at his office, that contradicts the statement of Lincoln that it fell out of the deed."

Is common sense to be abused with such sophistry? Did I say what Talbott found it in? If Talbott *did* find it in another paper at *his* office, is that any reason why he could not have folded it in a deed and brought it to *my* office, can any one be so far duped, as to be made believe that what may have happened at *Talbott's* office at one time, is inconsistent with what happened at *my* office at another time?

Now Talbott's statement of the case as he makes it to me is this, that he got a bunch of deeds from young Adams, and that he knows he found the assignment in the bunch, but he is not certain which particular deed it was in, nor is he certain whether it was folded in the same

deed out of which it was took, or another one, when it was brought to my office. Is this a mysterious story? Is there anything suspicious about it?

"But it is useless to dwell longer on this point. Any man who is not wilfully blind can see at a blush, that there is no discrepancy and Lincoln has shown that they are not only inconsistent with truth, but each other"—I can only say, that I have shown that he has done no such thing; and if the reader is disposed to require any other evidence than the General's assertion, he will be of my opinion.

Excepting the General's most flimsy attempt at mystification, in regard to a discrepance between Talbott and myself, he has not denied a single statement that I made in my hand-bill. Every material statement that I made has been sworn to by men who, in former times, were thought as respectable as General Adams. I stated that an assignment of a judgment, a copy of which I gave, had existed—Benj. Talbott, C. R. Matheny, Wm. Butler, and Judge Logan, swore to its existence, I stated that it was said to be in Gen. Adams's handwriting—the same men swore it was in his handwriting. I stated that Talbott would swear that he got it out of Gen. Adams's possession—Talbott came forward and did swear it.

Bidding adieu to the former publication, I now propose to examine the General's last gigantic production. I now propose to point out some discrepancies in the General's address; and such too, as he shall not be able to escape from. Speaking of the famous assignment, the General says, "This last charge, which was their last resort, their dying effort to render my character infamous among my fellow citizens, was manufactured at a certain lawyer's office in the town, printed at the office of the 'Sangamon Journal,' and found its way into the world some time between two days *just before the last election.*" Now turn to Mr. Key's affidavit in which you will find the following, (viz.) "I certify that some time in May or the early part of June, 1837, I saw at Williams's corner, a paper purporting to be an assignment from Joseph Anderson to James Adams, which assignment, was signed by a mark to Anderson's name," etc. Now mark, if Keys saw the assignment on the last of May or first of June, Gen. Adams tells a falsehood when he says it was *manufactured just before the election,* which was on the 7th of August; and if it was manufactured just before the election, Keys tells a falsehood when he says he saw it on the last of May or first of June. Either Keys or the General is irretrievably in for it; and in the General's very conde-

scending language, I say "let them settle it between them."

Now again, let the reader, bearing in mind that General Adams has unequivocally said, in one part of his address, that the charge in relation to the assignment was *manufactured just before the election;* turn to the affidavit of Peter S. Weber, where the following will be found, (viz.) "I, Peter S. Weber, do certify that from the best of my recollection, on the day or day after Gen. Adams started for the Illinois Rapids, in May last, that I was at the house of Gen. Adams, sitting in the kitchen, situated on the back part of the house, it being in the afternoon, and that Benjamin Talbott came around the house, back into the kitchen, and appeared wild and confused, and that he laid a package of papers on the kitchen table and requested that they should be handed to Lucian. He made no apology for coming to the kitchen, nor for not handing them to Lucian himself, but showed the token of being frightened and confused both in demeanor and speech and for what cause I could not apprehend."

Commenting on Weber's affidavit, Gen. Adams asks, "Why this fright and confusion?" I reply that this is a question for the General himself. Weber says that it was in May, and if so, it is most clear, that Talbott was not fright-

ened on account of the assignment, unless the General lies when he says the assignment charge was manufactured *just before the election.* Is it not a strong evidence, that the General is not traveling with the pole-star of truth in his front, to see him in one part of his address roundly asserting that the assignment was manufactured *just before the election,* and then, forgetting that position, procuring Weber's most foolish affidavit, to prove that Talbott had been engaged in manufacturing it *two months before?*

In another part of his address, Gen. Adams says, "That I hold an assignment of said judgment, dated the 20th of May, 1828, and signed by said Anderson, I have never pretended to deny or conceal, but stated that fact in one of my circulars previous to the election, and also in answer *to a bill in chancery.*" Now I pronounce this statement unqualifiedly false, and shall not rely on the word or oath of any man to sustain me in what I say; but will let the whole be decided by reference to the circular and answer in chancery of which the General speaks. In his circular he did speak of an assignment; but he *did not* say it bore date 20th of May, 1828; nor did he say it bore any date. In his answer in chancery, he did say that he had an assignment; but he *did not* say that it bore date the 20th of May, 1828; but so far from it,

he said on oath (for he swore to the answer) that as well as recollected, he obtained it in 1827. If any one doubts, let him examine the circular and answer for himself. They are both accessible.

It will readily be observed that the principal part of Adams's defense, rests upon the argument, that if he had been base enough to forge an assignment, he would not have been *fool enough* to forge one that would not cover the case. This argument he used in his circular before the election. The "Republican" has used it at least once, since then; and Adams uses it again in his publication of to-day. Now I pledge myself to show that he is just such a *fool,* that he and his friends have contended it was impossible for him to be. Recollect—he says he has a genuine assignment; and that he got Joseph Klein's affidavit, stating that he had seen it, and that he believed the signature to have been executed by the same hand, that signed Anderson's name to the answer in Chancery. Luckily Klein took a copy of this *genuine* assignment, which I have been permitted to see; and hence I know *it does not cover the case.* In the first place it is headed "Joseph Anderson vs. Joseph Miller," and heads off "Judgment in Sangamon Circuit Court." Now, mark, there never was a case in Sangamon Circuit Court en-

titled Joseph Anderson vs. Joseph Miller. The case mentioned in my former publication, and the only one between these parties that ever existed in the Circuit Court, was entitled Joseph Miller vs. Joseph Anderson, Miller being the plaintiff. What then becomes of all their sophistry about Adams not being *fool enough* to forge an assignment that would not cover the case? It is certain that the present one does not cover the case; and if he got it honestly, it is still clear that he *was fool enough* to pay for an assignment that does not cover the case.

The General asks for the proof of disinterested witnesses. Who does he consider disinterested? None can be more so than those who have already testified against him. No one of them had the least interest on earth, so far as I can learn, to injure him. True, he says they had conspired against him; but if the testimony of an angel from Heaven were introduced against him, he would make the same charge of conspiracy. And now I put the question to every reflecting man, do you believe that Benjamin Talbott, Chas. R. Matheny, William Butler and Stephen T. Logan, all sustaining high and spotless characters, and justly proud of them, would deliberately perjure themselves, without any motive whatever, except to injure a man's election; and that, too, a man who had

been a candidate, time out of mind, and yet who had never been elected to any office?

Adams's assurance, in demanding disinterested testimony, is surpassing. He brings in the affidavit of his own son, and even of Peter S. Weber, with whom I am not acquainted, but who, I suppose, is some black or mulatto boy, from his being kept in the kitchen, to prove his points; but when such a man as Talbott, a man who, but two years ago, run against Gen. Adams for the office of Recorder and beat him more than four votes to one, is introduced against him, he asks the community, with all the consequence of a lord, to reject his testimony.

I might easily write a volume, pointing out inconsistencies between the statements in Adams's last address with one another, and with other known facts; (but I am aware the reader must already be tired with the length of this article,) his opening statements, that he was first accused of being a tory, and that he refuted that; that then the Sampson's ghost story was got up, and he refuted that; that as a last resort, a dying effort, the assignment charge was got up is all as false as hell, as all this community must know. Sampson's ghost first made its appearance in print, and that too, after Keys swears he saw the assignment, as any one may see by reference to the files of papers; and Gen. Adams himself,

in reply to the Sampson's ghost story, was the *first man* that raised the cry of *toryism* and it was only by way of set off, and never in seriousness that it was banded back to him. His effort is to make the impression that his enemies first made the charge of toryism and he drove them from that, then Sampson's ghost, he drove them from that, then finally the assignment charge was manufactured *just before the election.* Now, the only general reply he ever made to the Sampson's ghost and tory charges, he made *at one and the same time,* and not in succession as he states; and the date of that reply will show, that it was made at least a month *after* the date on which Keys swears he saw the Anderson assignment. But enough. In conclusion I will only say that I have a character to defend as well as Gen. Adams, but I disdain to *whine* about it as he does. It is true I have no children nor *kitchen boys;* and if I had, I should scorn to lug them in to make affidavits for me.

A. LINCOLN.

September 6, 1837.

## *Reply to General Adams, Oct. 28, 1837

### TO THE PUBLIC

SUCH is the turn which things have lately taken, that when Gen. Adams writes a book, I am expected to write a commentary on it. In the "Republican" of this morning he has presented the world with a new work of six columns in length: in consequence of which I must beg the room of one column in the "Journal." It is obvious that a minute reply cannot be made in one column to everything that can be said in six; and consequently, I hope that expectation will be answered, if I reply to such parts of the General's publication as are worth replying to.

It may not be improper to remind the reader that in his publication of Sept. 6th, General Adams said that the assignment charge was manufactured *just before the election;* and that in reply I proved that statement to be false by Keys, his own witness. Now, without attempting to explain, he furnishes me with another witness (Tinsley) by which the same thing is proved,

to-wit, that the assignment *was not* manufactured *just before the election;* but that it was *some weeks* before. Let it be borne in mind that Adams made this statement—has himself furnished two witnesses to prove its falsehood, and does not attempt to deny or explain it. Before going farther, let a pin be stuck here, labeled "one lie proved and confessed." On the 6th of September he said he had before stated in the hand-bill that he held an assignment dated May 20th, 1828, which in reply I pronounced to be false, and referred to the hand-bill for the truth of what I said. This week he forgets to make any explanation of this. Let another pin be stuck here, labeled as before. I mention these things, because, if, when I convict him in one falsehood, he is permitted to shift his ground and pass it by in silence, there can be no end to this controversy.

The first thing that attracts my attention in the General's present production, is the information he is pleased to give to "Those who are made to suffer at his (my) *hands.*"

Under present circumstances, this cannot apply to me, for I am not a *widow* nor an *orphan:* nor have I a wife or children who might by possibility become such. Such, however, I have no doubt, have been, and will again be made to suffer at his *hands!! Hands!* Yes, they are

the mischievous agents. The next thing I shall notice is his favorite expression, "not of lawyers, doctors and others," which he is so fond of applying to all who dare expose his rascality. Now, let it be remembered that when he first came to this country he attempted to impose himself upon the community as a *lawyer,* and actually carried the attempt so far, as to induce a man who was under a charge of murder to entrust the defense of his life in his hands, and finally took his money and got him hanged. Is this the man that is to raise a breeze in his favor by abusing lawyers? If he is not himself a lawyer, it is for the lack of sense, and not of inclination. If he is not a lawyer, he *is* a liar for he proclaimed himself a lawyer, and got a man hanged by depending on him.

Passing over such parts of the article as have neither fact nor argument in them, I come to the question asked by Adams whether any person ever saw the assignment in his possession. This is an insult to common sense. Talbott has sworn once and repeated time and again, that he got it *out* of Adams's possession and returned it into the same possession. Still, as though he was addressing fools, he has assurance to ask if any person ever saw it in his possession. Next I quote a sentence, "Now my son Lucian swears that when Talbott called for the deed, that he,

Talbott, opened it and *pointed out the error.*" True. His son Lucian did swear as he says; and in doing so, he swore what I will prove by his own affidavit to be a falsehood. Turn to Lucian's affidavit, and you will there see that Talbott called for the deed by which to correct an error on the *record.* Thus it appears that the error in question was on the *record,* and not in the *deed.* How then could Talbott open the deed and point out the *error?* Where a thing *is not,* it cannot be pointed out. The error *was not* in the *deed,* and of course could not be pointed out there. This does not merely prove that the error could not be pointed out, as Lucian swore it was; but it proves, too, that the deed was not opened in his presence with a special view to the error, for if it had been, he could not have failed to see that there was no error in it. It is easy enough to see why Lucian swore this. His object was to prove that the assignment *was not* in the deed, when Talbott got it: but it was discovered he could not swear this safely, without first swearing the deed was *opened*—and if he swore it was *opened,* he must show a *motive* for opening it, and the conclusion with him and his father was, that the pointing out the error, would appear the most plausible.

For the purpose of showing that the assignment was not in the bundle when Talbott got it,

is the story introduced into Lucian's affidavit that the deeds were counted. It is a remarkable fact, and one that should stand as a warning to all liars and fabricators, that in this short affidavit of Lucian's, he only attempted to depart from the truth, so far as I have the means of knowing, in two points, to-wit, in *the opening the deed and pointing out the error;* and the *counting of the deeds,*—and in both of these he caught himself. About the counting, he caught himself thus—after saying the bundle contained *five* deeds and a lease, he proceeds, "and I saw no others papers than the *said deed* and lease." First he has *six* papers, and then he saw none but *two* for "my son Lucian's" benefit, let a pin be stuck here.

Adams again adduces the argument, that he could not have forged the assignment, for the reason that he could have had no *motive* for it. With those that know the facts there is no absence of motive. Admitting the paper, which he has filed in the suit to be genuine, it is clear that *it* cannot answer the purpose for which he designs it. Hence his motive for making one that he supposed would answer, is obvious.—His making the date too old is also easily enough accounted for. The records were not in his hands, and then there being some considerable talk upon this particular subject, he knew he

could not examine the records to ascertain the precise dates without subjecting himself to suspicion; and hence he concluded to try it by guess, and as it turned out, missed it a little. About Miller's deposition, I have a word to say. In the first place, Miller's answer to the first question shows upon its face, that he had been tampered with, and the answer dictated to him. He was asked if he knew Joel Wright and James Adams; and above three fourths of his answer consists of what he knew about Joseph Anderson, a man about whom nothing had been asked, nor a word said in the question—a fact that can only be accounted for upon the supposition, that Adams had secretly told him what he wished him to swear to.

Another of Miller's answers I will prove both by common sense and the Court of Record is untrue. To one question he answers, "Anderson brought a suit against me before James Adams, then an acting Justice of the Peace in Sangamon County, before whom he obtained a judgment.

Q.—Did you *remove* the same by injunction to the Sangamon Circuit Court? Ans.—I did remove it. Now mark—it is said he *removed* it by *injunction.* The word *"injunction"* in common language imports a command that some person or thing shall not *move* or be *removed;*

in law it has the same meaning. An injunction issuing out of Chancery to a Justice of the Peace, is a command to him to stop all proceedings in a named case until further orders. It is not an order to *remove* but to *stop* or stay something that is already *moving*. Besides this, the records of the Sangamon Circuit Court show, that the judgment of which Miller swore was never removed into said Court by injunction or otherwise.

I have now to take notice of a part of Adams's address which in the order of time should have been noticed before. It is in these words, "I have now shown, in the opinion of two competent judges, that the handwriting of the forged assignment differed from mine, *and by one of them that it could not be mistaken for mine.*" That is false. Tinsley no doubt is the judge referred to; and by reference to his certificate it will be seen that he did not say the handwriting of the assignment could not be mistaken for Adams's—nor did he use any other expression substantially, or anything near substantially the same. But if Tinsley had said the handwriting could not be mistaken for Adams's it would have been equally unfortunate for Adams: for it then would have contradicted Keys, who says, "I looked at the writing and judged it the said Adams's or a good imitation."

Adams speaks with much apparent confidence of his success attending law suits, and the ultimate maintenance of his title to the land in question. Without wishing to disturb the pleasure of his dream, I would say to him that it is not impossible, that he may yet be taught to sing a different song in relation to the matter.

At the end of Miller's deposition, Adams asks, "Will Mr. Lincoln *now* say that he is almost convinced my title to this ten acre tract of land is founded on fraud?" I answer, I will not. I will *now* change the phraseology so as to make it run—I am *quite* convinced, &c. I cannot pass in silence Adams's assertion that he has proved that the forged assignment was not in the deed when it came from his house by *Talbott,* the Recorder. In this, although Talbott has sworn that the assignment was in the bundle of deed when it came from his house, Adams has the unaccountable assurance to say that he has proved the contrary by Talbott. Let him or his friends attempt to show, wherein he proved any such thing by Talbott.

In his publication of the 6th of September he *hinted* to Talbott, that *he might be mistaken.* In his present, speaking of Talbott and me he says *"They may have been imposed upon,"* Can any man of the least penetration fail to see the object of this? After he has stormed and

raged till he hopes and imagines he has got us a little scared he wishes to softly whisper in our ears, "If you'll quit I will." If he could get us to say, that some unknown, undefined being had slipped the assignment into our hands without our knowledge, not a doubt remains but that he would immediately discover, that we were the purest men on earth. This is the ground he evidently wishes us to understand he is willing to compromise upon. But we ask no such charity at his hands. We are neither *mistaken* nor *imposed upon*. We have made the statements we have, because we know them to be true and we choose to live or die by them.

Esquire Carter, who is Adam's friend, personal and political, will recollect, that, on the 5th of this month, he (Adams), with a great affectation of modesty, declared that he would never introduce his own child as a witness. Notwithstanding this affectation of modesty, he has in his present publication introduced his child as witness; and as if to show with how much contempt he could treat his own declaration, he has had this same Esquire Carter to administer the oath to him. And so important a witness does he consider him, and so entirely does the whole of his entire present production depend upon the testimony of his child, that in it he has mentioned

"my son," "my son Lucian," "Lucian, my son," and the like expressions no less than fifteen different times. Let it be remembered here, that I have shown the affidavit of "my darling son Lucian" to be false by the evidence apparent on its own face; and I now ask if that affidavit be taken away what foundation will the fabric have left to stand upon?

General Adams's publications and out-door maneuvring taken in connection with the editorial articles of the "Republican," are not more foolish and contradictory than they are ludicrous and amusing. One week the "Republican" notifies the public that Gen. Adams is preparing an *instrument* that will tear, rend, split, rive, blow up, confound, overwhelm, annihilate, extinguish, exterminate, burst asunder, and grind to powder all its slanderers, and particularly Talbott and Lincoln—all of which is to be done *in due time*. Then for two or three weeks all is calm—not a word said. Again the "Republican" comes forth with a mere passing remark that "Public opinion has decided in favor of Gen. Adams," and intimates that he will give himself no more trouble about the matter. In the meantime Adams himself is prowling about, and as Burns says of the Devil, "For prey, a' holes and corners tryin'," and in one instance, goes so far as to take an old acquaintance of

mine several steps from a crowd and apparently weighed down with the importance of his business, gravely and solemnly asks him if *"he ever heard Lincoln say he was a deist."* Anon the "Republican" comes again, "We invite the attention of the public to General Adams's communication," &c., "The victory is a great one," "The triumph is overwhelming." (I really believe the editor of the Illinois "Republican" is fool enough to think General Adams is an honest man.) Then Gen. Adams leads off—*"Authors most egregiously mistaken,"* &c.,—— *"most woefully shall their presumption be punished,"* &c. (Lord, have mercy on us.) *"The hour is yet to come, yea nigh at hand*—(how long first do you reckon?)—*when the 'Journal' and its junto shall say, I have appeared too early."—"Then infamy shall be laid bare to the public gaze."* Suddenly the General appears to relent at the severity with which he is treating us and he exclaims, *"The condemnation of my enemies is the inevitable result of my own defense."* For your health's sake dear General, do not permit your tenderness of heart to afflict you so much on our account. For some reason (perhaps because we are killed so quickly) we shall never be sensible of our suffering.

Farewell, General. I will see you again at Court, if not before—when and where we will

settle the question whether you or the widow shall have the land. A. LINCOLN.

October 18, 1837.

## LETTER TO MRS. O. H. BROWNING[1]

SPRINGFIELD, April 1, 1838.

*Dear Madam:* Without apologizing for being egotistical, I shall make the history of so much of my life as has elapsed since I saw you the subject of this letter. And, by the way, I now discover that in order to give a full and intelligible account of the things I have done and suffered since I saw you, I shall necessarily have to relate some that happened before.

It was, then, in the autumn of 1836 that a married lady of my acquaintance, and who was a great friend of mine, being about to pay a visit to her father and other relatives residing in Kentucky, proposed to me that on her return she would bring a sister of hers with her on condition that I would engage to become her brother-in-law with all convenient despatch. I, of course, accepted the proposal, for you know I could not have done otherwise had I really been

[1] This letter to Mrs. Browning recounts a curious love affair between Mary Owen and Lincoln. Miss Owen refused him because he was "deficient in those little links which go to make up the chains of a woman's happiness," but it was probably because of the lack of ardor in his suit. Many years after when Mrs. Browning notified Lincoln that his letter was about to be published he cautioned her there was in it "too much truth for print."

averse to it; but privately between you and me, I was most confoundedly well pleased with the project. I had seen the said sister some three years before, thought her intelligent and agreeable, and saw no good objection to plodding life through hand in hand with her. Time passed on, the lady took her journey and in due time returned, sister in company, sure enough. This astonished me a little, for it appeared to me that her coming so readily showed that she was a trifle too willing, but on reflection it occured to me that she might have been prevailed on by her married sister to come, without anything concerning me having been mentioned to her, and so I concluded that if no other objection presented itself, I would consent to waive this. All this occurred to me on hearing of her arrival in the neighborhood—for, be it remembered, I had not yet seen her, except about three years previous, as above mentioned. In a few days we had an interview, and, although I had seen her before, she did not look as my imagination had pictured her. I knew she was over-size, but now she appeared a fair match for Falstaff. I knew she was called an "old maid," and I felt no doubt of the truth of at least half of the appellation, but now, when I beheld her, I could not for my life avoid thinking of my mother; and this, not from withered features,—for her skin

was too full of fat to permit of its contracting into wrinkles,—but from her want of teeth, weather-beaten appearance in general, and from a kind of notion that ran in my head that nothing could have commenced at the size of infancy and reached her present bulk in less than thirty-five or forty years; and, in short, I was not at all pleased with her. But what could I do? I had told her sister that I would take her for better or for worse, and I made a point of honor and conscience in all things to stick to my word, especially if others had been induced to act on it, which in this case I had no doubt they had, for I was now fairly convinced that no other man on earth would have her, and hence the conclusion that they were bent on holding me to my bargain. "Well," thought I, "I have said it, and, be the consequences what they may, it shall not be my fault if I fail to do it." At once I determined to consider her my wife, and this done, all my powers of discovery were put to work in search of perfections in her which might be fairly set off against her defects. I tried to imagine her handsome, which, but for her unfortunate corpulency, was actually true. Exclusive of this, no woman that I have ever seen has a finer face. I also tried to convince myself that the mind was much more to be valued than the person, and in this she was not in-

ferior, as I could discover, to any with whom I had been acquainted.

Shortly after this, without attempting to come to any positive understanding with her, I set out for Vandalia, when and where you first saw me. During my stay there I had letters from her which did not change my opinion of either her intellect or intention, but, on the contrary, confirmed it in both.

All this while, although I was fixed "firm as the surge-repelling rock" in my resolution, I found I was continually repenting the rashness which had led me to make it. Through life I have been in no bondage, either real or imaginary, from the thraldom of which I so much desired to be free. After my return home I saw nothing to change my opinion of her in any particular. She was the same, and so was I. I now spent my time in planning how I might get along in life after my contemplated change in circumstances should have taken place, and how I might procrastinate the evil day for a time, which I really dreaded as much, perhaps more, than an Irishman does the halter.

After all my sufferings upon this deeply interesting subject, here I am, wholly, unexpectedly, completely out of the "scrape," and I now want to know if you can guess how I got out of it—out, clear, in every sense of the term—no viola-

tion of word, honor, or conscience. I don't believe you can guess, and so I might as well tell you at once. As the lawyer says, it was done in the manner following, to-wit: After I had delayed the matter as long as I thought I could in honor do (which, by the way, had brought me round into the last fall), I concluded I might as well bring it to a consummation without further delay, and so I mustered my resolution and made the proposal to her direct; but, shocking to relate, she answered, No. At first I supposed she did it through an affectation of modesty, which I thought but ill became her under the peculiar circumstances of her case, but on my renewal of the charge I found she repelled it with greater firmness than before. I tried it again and again, but with the same success, or rather with the same want of success.

I finally was forced to give it up, at which I very unexpectedly found myself mortified almost beyond endurance. I was mortified, it seemed to me, in a hundred different ways. My vanity was deeply wounded by the reflection that I had so long been too stupid to discover her intentions, and at the same time never doubting that I understood them perfectly; and also that she, whom I had taught myself to believe nobody else would have, had actually rejected me with all my fancied greatness. And, to cap the

whole, I then for the first time began to suspect that I was really a little in love with her. But let it all go! I'll try and outlive it. Others have been made fools of by the girls, but this can never with truth be said of me. I most emphatically, in this instance, made a fool of myself. I have now come to the conclusion never again to think of marrying, and for this reason—I can never be satisfied with any one who would be blockhead enough to have me.

When you receive this, write me a long yarn about something to amuse me. Give my respects to Mr. Browning.

Your sincere friend,

MRS. O. H. BROWNING. A. LINCOLN.

## REMARKS IN THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, January 17, 1839.

Mr. Lincoln, from Committee on Finance, to which the subject was referred, made a report on the subject of purchasing of the United States all the unsold lands lying within the limits of the State of Illinois, accompanied by resolutions that this State propose to purchase all unsold lands at twenty-five cents per acre, and pledging the faith of the State to carry the proposal into effect if the government accept the same within two years.

. . . . . .

Mr. Lincoln thought the resolutions ought to be seriously considered. In reply to the gentleman from Adams, he said that it was not to enrich the State. The price of the lands may be raised, it was thought by some; by others, that it would be reduced. The conclusion in his mind was that the representatives in this legislature from the country in which the lands lie would be opposed to raising the price, because it would operate against the settlement of the lands. He referred to the lands in the military tract. They had fallen into the hands of large speculators in consequence of the low price. He was opposed to a low price of land. He thought it was adverse to the interests of the poor settler, because speculators buy them up. He was opposed to a reduction of the price of public lands.

Mr. Lincoln referred to some official documents emanating from Indiana, and compared the progressive population of the two States. Illinois had gained upon that State under the public land system as it is. His conclusion was that ten years from this time Illinois would have no more public land unsold than Indiana now has. He referred also to Ohio. That State had sold nearly all her public lands. She was but twenty years ahead of us, and as our lands were equally salable—more so, as he maintained—we

should have no more twenty years from now than she has at present.

Mr. Lincoln referred to the canal lands, and supposed that the policy of the State would be different in regard to them, if the representatives from that section of country could themselves choose the policy; but the representatives from other parts of the State had a veto upon it, and regulated the policy. He thought that if the State had all the lands, the policy of the legislature would be more liberal to all sections.

He referred to the policy of the General Government. He thought that if the national debt had not been paid, the expenses of the government would not have doubled, as they had done since that debt was paid.

## Letter to A. P. Field

Springfield, Illinois, May 11, 1839.

A. P. Field, Esq.

*Dear Sir:* At the late session an act passed both Houses of legislature for the benefit of the clerks of the Circuit Courts of Sangamon, Hamilton, and Fayette counties. I can see nothing of this act in the printed laws, one copy of which has reached us. I know it passed both Houses, but I am a little suspicious it has not been duly acted on by the Council of Revision. Will you

please learn and write us what condition it is in, and also send us a copy of the act? Mr. Butler will pay the charge on sight. Your friend,

A. LINCOLN.

## * LETTER TO R. HERNDON

SPRINGFIELD, June 11th, 1839.

*Dear Row:* Mr. Redman informs me that you wish me to write you the particulars of a conversation between Dr. Felix and myself relative to you. The Doctor overtook me between Rushville and Beardstown. He, after learning that I had lived in Springfield, asked if I was acquainted with you. I told him I was. He said you had lately been elected constable in Adams, but that you never would be again. I asked him why? He said the people there, had found out that you had been Sheriff or Deputy Sheriff in Sangamon County, and that you came off and left your securities to suffer. He then asked me if I did not know such to be the fact. I told him I did not think you had ever been Sheriff or Deputy Sheriff in Sangamon; but that I thought you had been constable. I further told him that if you had left your securities to suffer in that or any other case, I had never heard of it, and that if it had been so, I thought I would have heard of it.

If the Doctor is telling that I told him anything against you whatever, I authorize you to contradict it flatly. We have no news here.

Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## *LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE "CHICAGO AMERICAN."

SPRINGFIELD, June 24th, 1839.

*Mr. Editor:* From present indications we have every reason to believe that Mr. Douglass will contest the right of Mr. Stuart to a Seat in Congress. We deem it a matter of great importance to the Whig party of this District that they should be prepared to meet such contest. The importance of the decision of that contest is increased by the doubt which at present exists as to which party will have the ascendency in the next Congress. In this state of uncertainty one vote may become of the utmost importance to the sustaining of those great principles for which the Whig party are now contending. To prepare ourselves for the contest and to solicit your aid in so doing by engaging your assistance in the collection of proofs to the following facts, are the objects of this communication.

1st. Whether there are any mistakes for or against Mr. Stuart in the addition of columns

or otherwise, apparent on the face of the Poll Books of your County?

2nd. Whether any person voted for Mr. Douglass in your County who were *minors,* or who had not been *Residents* of the State *Six months* preceding the Election?

3rd. Whether any *unnaturalized foreigners* voted for Mr. Douglass in your County?

After you shall have examined into the preceding questions, we will thank you to write us the result without delay together with the *names* of the *illegal* voters referred to in the two last questions; the names of the individuals by whom the fact of their illegality can be proved and the name and the residence of a Justice of the Peace before whom depositions can be taken and a proper place to take them. When informed by you of the fact will immediately take steps to procure the proofs. We would suggest the propriety of your consulting the political Friends you may think proper in your County and solicit their assistance in procuring the above facts; or the appointment of precinct committees as you may think the most advisable.

Respectfully yours, &c.,

JOSHUA F. SPEED,
E. D. BAKER,
MILTON HAY,
JAMES H. MATHENY,
A. LINCOLN.

N. B.—Would it not be as well to keep the knowledge of this investigation, as well as any discoveries you may make, confined to as few as possible?

P. S.—Let letters on this subject, be addressed to "Stuart & Lincoln," as business letters.

### Letter to John T. Stuart

Springfield, November 14, 1839.

*Dear Stuart:* I have been to the secretary's office within the last hour, and find things precisely as you left them. No new arrivals of returns on either side. Douglas has not been here since you left. A report is in circulation here now that he has abandoned the idea of going to Washington, though the report does not come in a very authentic form, so far as I can learn. Though, by the way, speaking of authenticity, you know that if we had heard Douglas say that he had abandoned the contest, it would not be very authentic. There is no news here. Noah, I still think, will be elected very easily. I am afraid of our race for representative. Dr. Knapp has become a candidate, and I fear the few votes he will get will be taken from us. Also some one has been tampering with old Esquire Wicoff, and induced him to send in his name to be announced as a candidate. Francis refused to announce him without seeing him,

and now I suppose there is to be a fuss about it. I have been so busy that I have not seen Mrs. Stuart since you left, though I understand she wrote you by to-day's mail, which will inform you more about her than I could. The very moment a Speaker is elected, write me who he is. Your friend as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## Speech at a Political Discussion in the Hall of the House of Representatives at Springfield, Illinois, December [20?], 1839.[1]

(*From a pamphlet copy in possession of Hon. T. J. Henderson, Illinois.*)

FELLOW-CITIZENS: It is peculiarly embarrassing to me to attempt a continuance of the discussion, on this evening, which has been conducted in this hall on several preceding ones. It is so because on each of those evenings there was a much fuller attendance than now, without any reason for its being so, except the greater interest the community feel in the speakers who addressed them then than they do in him who is to do so now.

[1] The year 1839 found the seat of government in Illinois shifted from Vandalia to Springfield. A group of extraordinary men gathered in the new capital — Lincoln, Douglas, Baker, Calhoun, Stuart, Shields, Logan, Trumbull and others. Local issues were engulfed in national questions. Springfield was the centre of a political storm. During December, 1839, a series of public debates took place in which a number of leading orators participated. Lincoln was the last to speak, and his speech was regarded as the best delivered in the series. Upon demand it was printed for general distribution.

I am, indeed, apprehensive that the few who have attended have done so more to spare me mortification than in the hope of being interested in anything I may be able to say. This circumstance casts a damp upon my spirits, which I am sure I shall be unable to overcome during the evening. But enough of preface.

The subject heretofore and now to be discussed is the subtreasury scheme of the present administration, as a means of collecting, safekeeping, transferring, and disbursing the revenues of the nation, as contrasted with a national bank for the same purposes. Mr. Douglas has said that we (the Whigs) have not dared to meet them (the Locos) in argument on this question. I protest against this assertion. I assert that we have again and again, during this discussion, urged facts and arguments against the subtreasury which they have neither dared to deny nor attempted to answer. But lest some may be led to believe that we really wish to avoid the question, I now propose, in my humble way, to urge those arguments again; at the same time begging the audience to mark well the positions I shall take and the proof I shall offer to sustain them, and that they will not again permit Mr. Douglas or his friends to escape the force of them by a round and groundless assertion that we "dare not meet them in argument."

Of the subtreasury, then, as contrasted with a national bank for the before enumerated purposes, I lay down the following propositions, to-wit: (1) It will injuriously affect the community by its operation on the circulating medium. (2) It will be a more expensive fiscal agent. (3) It will be a less secure depository of the public money. To show the truth of the first proposition, let us take a short review of our condition under the operation of a national bank. It was the depository of the public revenues. Between the collection of those revenues and the disbursement of them by the government, the bank was permitted to and did actually loan them out to individuals, and hence the large amount of money annually collected for revenue purposes, which by any other plan would have been idle a great portion of the time, was kept almost constantly in circulation. Any person who will reflect that money is only valuable while in circulation, will readily perceive that any device which will keep the government revenues in constant circulation, instead of being locked up in idleness, is no inconsiderable advantage. By the subtreasury the revenue is to be collected and kept in iron boxes until the government wants it for disbursement; thus robbing the people of the use of it, while the government does not itself need it, and while the money is

performing no nobler office than that of rusting in iron boxes. The natural effect of this change of policy, every one will see, is to reduce the quantity of money in circulation. But, again, by the subtreasury scheme the revenue is to be collected in specie. I anticipate that this will be disputed. I expect to hear it said that it is not the policy of the administration to collect the revenue in specie. If it shall, I reply that Mr. Van Buren, in his message recommending the subtreasury, expended nearly a column of that document in an attempt to persuade Congress to provide for the collection of the revenue in specie exclusively; and he concludes with these words: "It may be safely assumed that no motive of convenience to the citizen requires the reception of bank paper." In addition to this, Mr. Silas Wright, senator from New York, and the political, personal, and confidential friend of Mr. Van Buren, drafted and introduced into the Senate the first subtreasury bill, and that bill provided for ultimately collecting the revenue in specie. It is true, I know, that that clause was stricken from the bill, but it was done by the votes of the Whigs, aided by a portion only of the Van Buren senators. No subtreasury bill has yet become a law, though two or three have been considered by Congress, some with and some without the specie clause; so that I admit

there is room for quibbling upon the question of whether the administration favor the exclusive specie doctrine or not; but I take it that the fact that the President at first urged the specie doctrine, and that under his recommendation the first bill introduced embraced it, warrants us in charging it as the policy of the party until their head as publicly recants it as he at first espoused it. I repeat, then, that by the subtreasury the revenue is to be collected in specie. Now mark what the effect of this must be. By all estimates ever made there are but between sixty and eighty millions of specie in the United States. The expenditures of the Government for the year 1838—the last for which we have had the report—were forty millions. Thus it is seen that if the whole revenue be collected in specie, it will take more than half of all the specie in the nation to do it. By this means more than half of all the specie belonging to the fifteen millions of souls who compose the whole population of the country is thrown into the hands of the public-office holders, and other public creditors, composing in number perhaps not more than one quarter of a million, leaving the other fourteen millions and three quarters to get along as they best can, with less than one half of the specie of the country, and whatever rags and shinplasters they may be able to put,

and keep, in circulation. By this means, every office-holder and other public creditor may, and most likely will, set up shaver; and a most glorious harvest will the specie-men have of it,—each specie-man, upon a fair division, having to his share the fleecing of about fifty-nine ragmen.[1] In all candor let me ask, was such a system for benefiting the few at the expense of the many ever before devised? And was the sacred

[1] On January 4, 1839, the Senate of the United States passed the following resolution, to-wit:

"*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Treasury be directed to communicate to the Senate any information he may recently have received in respect to the mode of collecting, keeping, and disbursing public moneys in foreign countries."

Under this resolution, the Secretary communicated to the Senate a letter, the following extract from which clearly shows that the collection of the revenue in specie will establish a sound currency for the office-holders, and a depreciated one for the people; and that the office-holders and other public creditors will turn shavers upon all the rest of the community. Here is the extract from the letter, being all of it that relates to the question:

"HAGUE, October 12, 1838.

"The financial system of Hamburg is, as far as is known, very simple, as may be supposed from so small a territory. The whole amount of Hamburg coined money is about four and a half millions of marks current, or one million two hundred and eighty-two thousand five hundred dollars; and, except under very extraordinary circumstances, not more than one half that amount is in circulation, and all duties, taxes, and excise must be paid in Hamburg currency. The consequence is that it invariably commands a premium of one to three per centum. Every year one senator and ten citizens are appointed to transact the whole of the financial concern, both as to receipt and disbursement of the funds, which is always in cash, and is every day deposited in the bank,

name of Democracy ever before made to indorse such an enormity against the rights of the people?

I have already said that the subtreasury will reduce the quantity of money in circulation. This position is strengthened by the recollection that the revenue is to be collected in specie, so that the mere amount of revenue is not all that is withdrawn, but the amount of paper circulation that the forty millions would serve as a basis to is withdrawn, which would be in a sound state at least one hundred millions. When one hundred millions, or more, of the circulation we now have shall be withdrawn, who can contemplate

to the credit of the chancery; and, on being paid out, the citizen to whose department the payment belongs must appear personally with the check or order stating the amount and to whom to be paid. The person receiving very seldom keeps the money, preferring to dispose of it to a money-changer at a premium, and taking other coin at a discount, of which there is a great variety and a large amount constantly in circulation, and on which in his daily payment he loses nothing; and those who have payments to make to the government apply to the money-changers again for Hamburg currency, which keeps it in constant motion, and I believe it frequently occurs that the bags, which are sealed and labeled with the amount, are returned again to the bank without being opened.

"With great respect, your obedient servant,

JOHN CUTHBERT.

"To the Hon. LEVI WOODBURY, Secretary of the Treasury,
"Washington, D. C."

This letter is found in Senate document, p. 113 of the session of 1838–9.

without terror the distress, ruin, bankruptcy, and beggary that must follow. The man who has purchased any article—say a horse—on credit, at one hundred dollars, when there are two hundred millions circulating in the country, if the quantity be reduced to one hundred millions by the arrival of pay-day, will find the horse but sufficient to pay half the debt; and the other half must either be paid out of his other means, and thereby become a clear loss to him, or go unpaid, and thereby become a clear loss to his creditor. What I have here said of a single case of the purchase of a horse will hold good in every case of a debt existing at the time a reduction in the quantity of money occurs, by whomsoever, and for whatsoever, it may have been contracted. It may be said that what the debtor loses the creditor gains by this operation; but on examination this will be found true only to a very limited extent. It is more generally true that all lose by it—the creditor by losing more of his debts than he gains by the increased value of those he collects; the debtor by either parting with more of his property to pay his debts than he received in contracting them, or by entirely breaking up his business, and thereby being thrown upon the world in idleness.

The general distress thus created will, to be sure, be temporary, because whatever change

may occur in the quantity of money in any community, time will adjust the derangement produced; but while that adjustment is progressing, all suffer more or less, and very many lose everything that renders life desirable. Why, then, shall we suffer a severe difficulty, even though it be but temporary, unless we receive some equivalent for it?

What I have been saying as to the effect produced by a reduction of the quantity of money relates to the whole country. I now propose to show that it would produce a peculiar and permanent hardship upon the citizens of those States and Territories in which the public lands lie. The land-offices in those States and Territories, as all know, form the great gulf by which all, or nearly all, the money in them is swallowed up. When the quantity of money shall be reduced, and consequently everything under individual control brought down in proportion, the price of those lands, being fixed by law, will remain as now. Of necessity it will follow that the produce or labor that now raises money sufficient to purchase eighty acres will then raise but sufficient to purchase forty, or perhaps not that much; and this difficulty and hardship will last as long, in some degree, as any portion of these lands shall remain undisposed of. Knowing, as I well do, the difficulty that poor people

now encounter in procuring homes, I hesitate not to say that when the price of the public lands shall be doubled or trebled, or, which is the same thing, produce and labor cut down to one half or one third of their present prices, it will be little less than impossible for them to procure those homes at all.

In answer to what I have said as to the effect the subtreasury would have upon the currency, it is often urged that the money collected for revenue purposes will not lie idle in the vaults of the treasury; and, farther, that a national bank produces greater derangement in the currency, by a system of contractions and expansions, than the subtreasury would produce in any way. In reply, I need only show that experience proves the contrary of both these propositions. It is an undisputed fact that the late Bank of the United States paid the government $75,000 annually for the privilege of using the public money between the times of its collection and disbursement. Can any man suppose that the bank would have paid this sum annually for twenty years, and then offered to renew its obligations to do so, if in reality there was no time intervening between the collection and disbursement of the revenue, and consequently no privilege of using the money extended to it? Again, as to the contractions and expansions of a national bank, I need

only point to the period intervening between the time that the late bank got into successful operation and that at which the government commenced war upon it, to show that during that period no such contractions or expansions took place. If, before or after that period, derangement occurred in the currency, it proves nothing. The bank could not be expected to regulate the currency, either before it got into successful operation, or after it was crippled and thrown into death convulsions, by the removal of the deposits from it, and other hostile measures of the government against it. We do not pretend that a national bank can establish and maintain a sound and uniform state of currency in the country, in spite of the National Government; but we do say that it has established and maintained such a currency, and can do so again, by the aid of that government; and we further say that no duty is more imperative on that government than the duty it owes the people of furnishing them a sound and uniform currency.

I now leave the proposition as to the effect of the subtreasury upon the currency of the country, and pass to that relative to the additional expense which must be incurred by it over that incurred by a national bank as a fiscal agent of the government. By the late national bank we had the public revenue received, safely kept,

transferred, and disbursed, not only without expense, but we actually received of the bank $75,000 annually for its privileges while rendering us those services. By the subtreasury, according to the estimate of the Secretary of the Treasury, who is the warm advocate of the system (and which estimate is the lowest made by any one), the same services are to cost $60,000. Mr. Rives, who, to say the least, is equally talented and honest, estimates that these services, under the subtreasury system, cannot cost less than $600,000. For the sake of liberality, let us suppose that the estimates of the secretary and Mr. Rives are the two extremes, and that their mean is about the true estimate, and we shall then find that when to that sum is added the $75,000 which the bank paid us, the difference between the two systems, in favor of the bank and against the subtreasury, is $405,000 a year. This sum, though small when compared to the many millions annually expended by the General Government, is, when viewed by itself, very large; and much too large, when viewed in any light, to be thrown away once a year for nothing. It is sufficient to pay the pensions of more than four thousand Revolutionary soldiers, or to purchase a forty-acre tract of government land for each one of more than eight thousand poor families.

To the argument against the subtreasury, on

the score of additional expense, its friends, so far as I know, attempt no answer. They choose, so far as I can learn, to treat the throwing away of $405,000 once a year as a matter entirely too small to merit their Democratic notice.

I now come to the proposition that it would be less secure than a national bank as a depository of the public money. The experience of the past, I think, proves the truth of this. And here, inasmuch as I rely chiefly upon experience to establish it, let me ask how is it that we know anything—that any event will occur, that any combination of circumstances will produce a certain result—except by the analogies of past experience? What has once happened will invariably happen again when the same circumstances which combined to produce it shall again combine in the same way. We all feel that we know that a blast of wind would extinguish the flame of the candle that stands by me. How do we know it? We have never seen this flame thus extinguished. We know it because we have seen through all our lives that a blast of wind extinguishes the flame of a candle whenever it is thrown fully upon it. Again, we all feel to know that we have to die. How? We have never died yet. We know it because we know, or at least think we know, that of all the beings, just like ourselves, who have been coming into

the world for six thousand years, not one is now living who was here two hundred years ago. I repeat, then, that we know nothing of what will happen in future, but by the analogy of experience, and that the fair analogy of past experience fully proves that the subtreasury would be a less safe depository of the public money than a national bank. Examine it. By the subtreasury scheme the public money is to be kept, between the times of its collection and disbursement, by treasurers of the mint, custom-house officers, land officers, and some new officers to be appointed in the same way that those first enumerated are. Has a year passed, since the organization of the government, that numerous defalcations have not occurred among this class of officers? Look at Swartwout with his $1,200,000, Price with his $75,000, Harris with his $109,000, Hawkins with his $100,000, Linn with his $55,000, together with some twenty-five hundred lesser lights. Place the public money again in these same hands, and will it not again go the same way? Most assuredly it will. But turn to the history of the national banks of this country, and we shall there see that those banks performed the fiscal operations of the government through a period of forty years, received, safely kept, transferred, disbursed an aggregate of nearly five hundred millions of dollars; and that,

in all this time, and with all that money, not one dollar, nor one cent, did the government lose by them. Place the public money again in a similar depository, and will it not again be safe. But, conclusive as the experience of fifty years is that individuals are unsafe depositories of the public money, and of forty years that national banks are safe depositories, we are not left to rely solely upon that experience for the truth of those propositions. If experience were silent upon the subject, conclusive reasons could be shown for the truth of them.

It is often urged that to say the public money will be more secure in a national bank than in the hands of individuals, as proposed in the sub-treasury, is to say that bank directors and bank officers are more honest than sworn officers of the government. Not so. We insist on no such thing. We say that public officers, selected with reference to their capacity and honesty (which, by the way, we deny is the practice in these days), stand an equal chance, precisely, of being capable and honest with bank officers selected by the same rule. We further say that with however much care selections may be made, there will be some unfaithful and dishonest in both classes. The experience of the whole world, in all bygone times, proves this true. The Saviour of the world chose twelve disciples,

and even one of that small number, selected by superhuman wisdom, turned out a traitor and a devil. And it may not be improper here to add that Judas carried the bag—was the subtreasurer of the Saviour and his disciples. We, then, do not say—nor need we say to maintain our proposition—that bank officers are more honest than government officers selected by the same rule. What we do say is that the interest of the subtreasurer is against his duty, while the interest of the bank is on the side of its duty. Take instances. A subtreasurer has in his hands one hundred thousand dollars of public money; his duty says, "You ought to pay this money over," but his interest says, "You ought to run away with this sum, and be a nabob the balance of your life." And who that knows anything of human nature doubts that in many instances interest will prevail over duty, and that the subtreasurer will prefer opulent knavery in a foreign land to honest poverty at home? But how different is it with a bank. Besides the government money deposited with it, it is doing business upon a large capital of its own. If it proves faithful to the government, it continues its business; if unfaithful, it forfeits its charter, breaks up its business, and thereby loses more than all it can make by seizing upon the government funds in its possession. Its interest, there-

fore, is on the side of its duty—is to be faithful to the government, and consequently even the dishonest amongst its managers have no temptation to be faithless to it. Even if robberies happen in the bank, the losses are borne by the bank, and the government loses nothing. It is for this reason, then, that we say a bank is the more secure. It is because of that admirable feature in the bank system which places the interest and the duty of the depository both on one side; whereas that feature can never enter into the subtreasury system. By the latter the interest of the individuals keeping the public money will wage an eternal war with their duty, and in very many instances must be victorious. In answer to the argument drawn from the fact that individual depositories of public money have always proved unsafe, it is urged that, even if we had a national bank, the money has to pass through the same individual hands that it will under the subtreasury. This is only partially true in fact, and wholly fallacious in argument. It is only partially true in fact, because by the subtreasury bill four receivers-general are to be appointed by the President and Senate. These are new officers, and consequently it cannot be true that the money, or any portion of it, has heretofore passed through their hands. These four new officers are to be located at New York, Boston,

Charleston, and St. Louis, and consequently are to be depositories of all the money collected at or near those points; so that more than three fourths of the public money will fall into the keeping of these four new officers, who did not exist as officers under the national-bank system. It is only partially true, then, that the money passes through the same hands, under a national bank, as it would do under the subtreasury. It is true that under either system individuals must be employed as collectors of the customs, receivers at the land-offices, etc., but the difference is that under the bank system the receivers of all sorts receive the money and pay it over to the bank once a week when the collections are large, and once a month when they are small; whereas by the subtreasury system individuals are not only to collect the money, but they are to keep it also, or pay it over to other individuals equally unsafe as themselves, to be by them kept until it is wanted for disbursement. It is during the time that it is thus lying idle in their hands that opportunity is afforded and temptation held out to them to embezzle and escape with it. By the bank system each collector or receiver is to deposit in bank all the money in his hands at the end of each month at most, and to send the bank certificates of deposit to the Secretary of the Treasury. Whenever that certificate of deposit

fails to arrive at the proper time, the secretary knows that the officer thus failing is acting the knave; and, if he is himself disposed to do his duty, he has him immediately removed from office, and thereby cuts him off from the possibility of embezzling but little more than the receipts of a single month. But by the sub-treasury system the money is to lie month after month in the hands of individuals; larger amounts are to accumulate in the hands of the receivers-general and some others, by perhaps ten to one, than ever accumulated in the hands of individuals before; yet during all this time, in relation to this great stake, the Secretary of the Treasury can comparatively know nothing. Reports, to be sure, he will have; but reports are often false, and always false when made by a knave to cloak his knavery. Long experience has shown that nothing short of an actual demand of the money will expose an adroit peculator. Ask him for reports, and he will give them to your heart's content; send agents to examine and count the money in his hands, and he will borrow of a friend, merely to be counted and then returned, a sufficient sum to make the sum square. Try what you will, it will all fail till you demand the money; then, and not till then, the truth will come.

The sum of the whole matter I take to be this:

Under the bank system, while sums of money, by the law, were permitted to lie in the hands of individuals for very short periods only, many and very large defalcations occurred by those individuals. Under the subtreasury system much larger sums are to lie in the hands of individuals for much longer periods, thereby multiplying temptation in proportion as the sums are larger, and multiplying opportunity in proportion as the periods are longer to and for those individuals to embezzle and escape with the public treasure; and therefore, just in the proportion that the temptation and the opportunity are greater under the subtreasury than the bank system, will the peculations and defalcations be greater under the former than they have been under the latter. The truth of this, independent of actual experience, is but little less than self-evident. I therefore leave it.

But it is said, and truly too, that there is to be a penitentiary department to the subtreasury. This, the advocates of the system will have it, will be a "king cure-all." Before I go farther, may I not ask if the penitentiary department is not itself an admission that they expect the public money to be stolen? Why build the cage if they expect to catch no birds? But as to the question how effectual the penitentiary will be in preventing defalcations. How effectual have

penitentiaries heretofore been in preventing the crimes they were established to suppress? Has not confinement in them long been the legal penalty of larceny, forgery, robbery, and many other crimes, in almost all the States? And yet are not those crimes committed weekly, daily,—nay, and even hourly,—in every one of those States? Again, the gallows has long been the penalty of murder, and yet we scarcely open a newspaper that does not relate a new case of that crime. If, then, the penitentiary has ever heretofore failed to prevent larceny, forgery, and robbery, and the gallows and halter have likewise failed to prevent murder, by what process of reasoning, I ask, is it that we are to conclude the penitentiary will hereafter prevent the stealing of the public money? But our opponents seem to think they answer that charge that the money will be stolen fully if they can show that they will bring the offenders to punishment. Not so. Will the punishment of the thief bring back the stolen money? No more so than the hanging of a murderer restores his victim to life. What is the object desired? Certainly not the greatest number of thieves we can catch, but that the money may not be stolen. If, then, any plan can be devised for depositing the public treasure where it will never be stolen, never embezzled, is not that the plan to be adopted? Turn, then,

to a national bank, and you have that plan, fully and completely successful, as tested by the experience of forty years.

I have now done with the three propositions that the subtreasury would injuriously affect the currency, and would be more expensive and less secure as a depository of the public money than a national bank. How far I have succeeded in establishing their truth, is for others to judge. Omitting, for want of time, what I had intended to say as to the effect of the subtreasury to bring the public money under the more immediate control of the President than it has ever heretofore been, I now ask the audience, when Mr. Calhoun shall answer me, to hold him to the questions. Permit him not to escape them. Require him either to show that the subtreasury would not injuriously affect the currency, or that we should in some way receive an equivalent for that injurious effect. Require him either to show that the subtreasury would not be more expensive as a fiscal agent than a bank, or that we should in some way be compensated for that additional expense. And particularly require him to show that the public money would be as secure in the subtreasury as in a national bank, or that the additional insecurity would be overbalanced by some good result of the proposed change.

No one of them, in my humble judgment, will

he be able to do; and I venture the prediction, and ask that it may be especially noted, that he will not attempt to answer the proposition that the subtreasury would be more expensive than a national bank as a fiscal agent of the government.

As a sweeping objection to a national bank, and consequently an argument in favor of the subtreasury as a substitute for it, it often has been urged, and doubtless will be again, that such a bank is unconstitutional. We have often heretofore shown, and therefore need not in detail do so again, that a majority of the Revolutionary patriarchs, who ever acted officially upon the question, commencing with General Washington, and embracing General Jackson, the larger number of the signers of the Declaration, and of the framers of the Constitution, who were in the Congress of 1791, have decided upon their oaths that such a bank is constitutional. We have also shown that the votes of Congress have more often been in favor of than against its constitutionality. In addition to all this, we have shown that the Supreme Court—that tribunal which the Constitution has itself established to decide constitutional questions—has solemnly decided that such a bank is constitutional. Protesting that these authorities ought to settle the question,—ought to be conclusive,—I will not

urge them further now. I now propose to take a view of the question which I have not known to be taken by any one before. It is that whatever objection ever has or ever can be made to the constitutionality of a bank, will apply with equal force, in its whole length, breadth, and proportions, to the subtreasury. Our opponents say there is no express authority in the Constitution to establish a bank, and therefore, a bank is unconstitutional; but we with equal truth may say there is no express authority in the Constitution to establish a subtreasury, and therefore a subtreasury is unconstitutional. Who, then, has the advantage of this "express authority" argument? Does it not cut equally both ways? Does it not wound them as deeply and as deadly as it does us? Our position is that both are constitutional. The Constitution enumerates expressly several powers which Congress may exercise, superadded to which is a general authority "to make all laws necessary and proper" for carrying into effect all the powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States. One of the express powers given Congress is "to lay and collect taxes, duties, imports, and excises; to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States." Now, Congress is expressly authorized to make all laws necessary and proper

for carrying this power into execution. To carry it into execution, it is indispensably necessary to collect, safely keep, transfer, and disburse a revenue. To do this, a bank is "necessary and proper." But, say our opponents, to authorize the making of a bank, the necessity must be so great that the power just recited would be nugatory without it; and that that necessity is expressly negatived by the fact that they have got along ten whole years without such a bank. Immediately we turn on them, and say that that sort of necessity for a subtreasury does not exist, because we have got along forty whole years without one. And this time, it may be observed that we are not merely equal with them in the argument, but we beat them forty to ten, or, which is the same thing, four to one. On examination, it will be found that the absurd rule which prescribes that before we can constitutionally adopt a national bank as a fiscal agent, we must show an indispensable necessity for it, will exclude every sort of fiscal agent that the mind of man can conceive. A bank is not indispensable, because we can take the subtreasury; the subtreasury is not indispensable, because we can take the bank. The rule is too absurd to need further comment. Upon the phrase "necessary and proper" in the Constitution, it seems to me more reasonable to say that some fiscal agent is indispensably necessary;

but inasmuch as no particular sort of agent is thus indispensable, because some other sort might be adopted, we are left to choose that sort of agent which may be most "proper" on grounds of expediency. But it is said the Constitution gives no power to Congress to pass acts of incorporation. Indeed! What is the passing of an act of incorporation but the making of a law? Is any one wise enough to tell? The Constitution expressly gives Congress power "to pass all laws necessary and proper," etc. If, then, the passing of a bank charter be the "making a law necessary and proper," is it not clearly within the constitutional power of Congress to do so?

I now leave the bank and the subtreasury to try to answer, in a brief way, some of the arguments which on previous evenings here have been urged by Messrs. Lamborn and Douglas. Mr. Lamborn admits that "errors," as he charitably calls them, have occurred under the present and late administrations; but he insists that as great "errors" have occurred under all administrations. This we respectfully deny. We admit that errors may have occurred under all administrations; but we insist that there is no parallel between them and those of the two last. If they can show that their errors are no greater in number and magnitude than those of former

times, we call off the dogs. But they can do no such thing. To be brief, I will now attempt a contrast of the "errors" of the two latter with those of former administrations, in relation to the public expenditures only. What I am now about to say as to the expenditures will be, in all cases, exclusive of payments on the national debt. By an examination of authentic public documents, consisting of the regular series of annual reports made by all the secretaries of the treasury from the establishment of the government down to the close of the year 1838, the following contrasts will be presented:

(1) The last ten years under General Jackson and Mr. Van Buren cost more money than the first twenty-seven did (including the heavy expenses of the late British war) under Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Madison.

(2) The last year of J. Q. Adams's administration cost, in round numbers, thirteen millions, being about one dollar to each soul in the nation; the last (1838) of Mr. Van Buren's cost forty millions, being about two dollars and fifty cents to each soul, and being larger than the expenditure of Mr. Adams in the proportion of five to two.

(3) The highest annual expenditure during the late British war—being in 1814, and while we had in actual service rising 188,000 militia,

together with the whole regular army, swelling the number to greatly over 200,000, and they to be clad, fed, and transported from point to point, with great rapidity and corresponding expense, and to be furnished with arms and ammunition, and they to be transported in like manner, and at like expense—was no more in round numbers than thirty millions; whereas the annual expenditure of 1838, under Mr. Van Buren, and while we were at peace with every government in the world, was forty millions; being over the highest year of the late and very expensive war in the proportion of four to three.

(4) General Washington administered the government eight years for sixteen millions. Mr. Van Buren administered it one year (1838) for forty millions; so that Mr. Van Buren expended twice and a half as much in one year as General Washington did in eight, and being in the proportion of twenty to one; or in other words, had General Washington administered the government twenty years at the same average expense that he did for eight, he would have carried us through the whole twenty for no more money than Mr. Van Buren has expended in getting us through the single one of 1838. Other facts equally astounding might be presented from the same authentic document; but I deem the foregoing abundantly sufficient to establish

the proposition that there is no parallel between the "errors" of the present and late administrations and those of former times, and that Mr. Van Buren is wholly out of the line of all precedents.

But Mr. Douglas, seeing that the enormous expenditure of 1838 has no parallel in the olden times, comes in with a long list of excuses for it. This list of excuses I will rapidly examine, and show, as I think, that the few of them which are true prove nothing, and that the majority of them are wholly untrue in fact. He first says that the expenditures of that one year were made under the appropriations of Congress—one branch of which was a Whig body. It is true that those expenditures were made under the appropriations of Congress; but it is untrue that either branch of Congress was a Whig body. The Senate had fallen into the hands of the administration more than a year before, as proven by the passage of the Expunging Resolution; and at the time those appropriations were made there were too few Whigs in that body to make a respectable struggle, in point of numbers, upon any question. This is notorious to all. The House of Representatives that voted those appropriations was the same that first assembled at the called session of September, 1838. Although it refused to pass the Subtreasury Bill,

a majority of its members were elected as friends of the administration, and proved their adherence to it by the election of a Van Buren speaker, and two Van Buren clerks. It is clear, then, that both branches of the Congress that passed those appropriations were in the hands of Mr. Van Buren's friends, so that the Whigs had no power to arrest them, as Mr. Douglas would insist. And is not the charge of extravagant expenditures equally well sustained, if shown to have been made by a Van Buren Congress, as if shown to have been made in any other way? A Van Buren Congress passed the bills, and Mr. Van Buren himself approved them, and consequently the party are wholly responsible for them.

Mr. Douglas next says that a portion of the expenditures of that year was made for the purchase of public lands from the Indians. Now it happens that no such purchase was made during that year. It is true that some money was paid that year in pursuance of Indian treaties; but no more, or rather not as much as had been paid on the same account in each of several preceding years.

Next he says that the Florida war created many millions of this year's expenditure. This is true, and it is also true that during that and every other year that that war has existed, it has

cost three or four times as much as it would have done under an honest and judicious administration of the government. The large sums foolishly, not to say corruptly, thrown away in that war constitute one of the just causes of complaint against the administration. Take a single instance. The agents of the government in connection with that war needed a certain steamboat; the owner proposed to sell it for ten thousand dollars; the agents refused to give that sum, but hired the boat at one hundred dollars per day, and kept it at that hire till it amounted to ninety-two thousand dollars. This fact is not found in the public reports, but depends with me, on the verbal statement of an officer of the navy, who says he knows it to be true. That the administration ought to be credited for the reasonable expenses of the Florida war, we have never denied. Those reasonable charges, we say, could not exceed one or two millions a year. Deduct such a sum from the forty-million expenditure of 1838, and the remainder will still be without a parallel as an annual expenditure.

Again, Mr. Douglas says that the removal of the Indians to the country west of the Mississippi created much of the expenditure of 1838. I have examined the public documents in relation to this matter, and find that less was paid for the removal of Indians in that than in

some former years. The whole sum expended on that account in that year did not much exceed one quarter of a million. For this small sum, although we do not think the administration entitled to credit, because large sums have been expended in the same way in former years, we consent it may take one and make the most of it.

Next, Mr. Douglas says that five millions of the expenditures of 1838 consisted of the payment of the French indemnity money to its individual claimants. I have carefully examined the public documents, and thereby find this statement to be wholly untrue. Of the forty millions of dollars expended in 1838, I am enabled to say positively that not one dollar consisted of payments on the French indemnities. So much for that excuse.

Next comes the Post-office. He says that five millions were expended during that year to sustain that department. By a like examination of public documents, I find this also wholly untrue. Of the so often mentioned forty millions, not one dollar went to the Post-office. I am glad, however, that the Post-office has been referred to, because it warrants me in digressing a little to inquire how it is that that department of the government has become a charge upon the treasury, whereas under Mr. Adams and the presidents before him it not only, to use a homely

phrase, cut its own fodder, but actually threw a surplus into the treasury. Although nothing of the forty millions was paid on that account in 1838, it is true that five millions are appropriated to be so expended in 1839; showing clearly that the department has become a charge upon the treasury. How has this happened? I account for it in this way. The chief expense of the Post-office Department consists of the payments of contractors for carrying the mail. Contracts for carrying the mails are by law let to the lowest bidders, after advertisement. This plan introduces competition, and insures the transportation of the mails at fair prices, so long as it is faithfully adhered to. It has ever been adhered to until Mr. Barry was made postmaster-general. When he came into office, he formed the purpose of throwing the mail contracts into the hands of his friends, to the exclusion of his opponents. To effect this, the plan of letting to the lowest bidder must be evaded, and it must be done in this way: the favorite bid less by perhaps three or four hundred per cent than the contract could be performed for, and consequently shutting out all honest competition, became the contractor. The Postmaster-General would immediately add some slight additional duty to the contract, and under the pretense of extra allowance for extra services

run the contract to double, triple, and often quadruple what honest and fair bidders had proposed to take it at. In 1834 the finances of the department had become so deranged that total concealment was no longer possible, and consequently a committee of the Senate were directed to make a thorough investigation of its affairs. Their report is found in the Senate Documents of 1833–4, Vol. V, Doc. 422; which documents may be seen at the secretary's office, and I presume elsewhere in the State. The report shows numerous cases of similar import, of one of which I give the substance. The contract for carrying the mail upon a certain route had expired, and of course was to be let again. The old contractor offered to take it for $300 a year, the mail to be transported thereon three times a week, or for $600 transported daily. One James Reeside bid $40 for three times a week, or $99 daily, and of course received the contract. On the examination of the committee, it was discovered that Reeside had received for the service on this route, which he had contracted to render for less than $100, the enormous sum of $1,999! This is but a single case. Many similar ones, covering some ten or twenty pages of a large volume, are given in that report. The department was found to be insolvent to the amount of half a million, and to have been so grossly

mismanaged, or rather so corruptly managed, in almost every particular, that the best friends of the Postmaster-General made no defense of his administration of it. They admitted that he was wholly unqualified for that office; but still he was retained in it by the President until he resigned it voluntarily about a year afterward. And when he resigned it, what do you think became of him? Why, he sunk into obscurity and disgrace, to be sure, you will say. No such thing. Well, then, what did become of him? Why, the President immediately expressed his high disapprobation of his almost unequaled incapacity and corruption by appointing him to a foreign mission, with a salary and outfit of $18,000 a year! The party now attempt to throw Barry off, and to avoid the responsibility of his sins. Did not the President indorse those sins when, on the very heel of their commission, he appointed their author to the very highest and most honorable office in his gift, and which is but a single step behind the very goal of American political ambition?

I return to another of Mr. Douglas's excuses for the expenditures of 1838, at the same time announcing the pleasing intelligence that this is the last one. He says that ten millions of that year's expenditure was a contingent appropriation, to prosecute an anticipated war with Great

Britain on the Maine boundary question. Few words will settle this. First, that the ten millions appropriated was not made till 1839, and consequently could not have been expended in 1838; second, although it was appropriated, it has never been expended at all. Those who heard Mr. Douglas recollect that he indulged himself in a contemptuous expression of pity for me. "Now he's got me," thought I. But when he went on to say that five millions of the expenditure of 1838 were payments of the French indemnities, which I knew to be untrue; that five millions had been for the Post-office, which I knew to be untrue; that ten millions had been for the Maine boundary war, which I not only knew to be untrue, but supremely ridiculous also; and when I saw that he was stupid enough to hope that I would permit such groundless and audacious assertions to go unexposed,—I readily consented that, on the score both of veracity and sagacity, the audience should judge whether he or I were the more deserving of the world's contempt.

Mr. Lamborn insists that the difference between the Van Buren party and the Whigs is that although the former sometimes err in practice, they are always correct in principle, whereas the latter are wrong in principle; and, better to impress this proposition, he uses a fig-

urative expression in these words: "The Democrats are vulnerable in the heel, but they are sound in the head and the heart." The first branch of the figure—that is, that the Democrats are vulnerable in the heel—I admit is not merely figuratively, but literally true. Who that looks but for a moment at their Swartwouts, their Prices, their Harringtons, and their hundreds of others, scampering away with the public money to Texas, to Europe, and to every spot of the earth where a villain may hope to find refuge from justice, can at all doubt that they are most distressingly affected in their heels with a species of "running itch." It seems that this malady of their heels operates on these sound-headed and honest-hearted creatures very much like the cork leg in the comic song did on its owner: which, when he had once got started on it, the more he tried to stop it, the more it would run away. At the hazard of wearing this point threadbare, I will relate an anecdote which seems too strikingly in point to be omitted. A witty Irish soldier, who was always boasting of his bravery when no danger was near, but who invariably retreated without orders at the first charge of an engagement, being asked by his captain why he did so, replied: "Captain, I have as brave a heart as Julius Cæsar ever had; but, somehow or other, whenever danger approaches, my cow-

ardly legs will run away with it." So with Mr. Lamborn's party. They take the public money into their hand for the most laudable purpose that wise heads and honest hearts can dictate; but before they can possibly get it out again, their rascally "vulnerable heels" will run away with them.

Seriously, this proposition of Mr. Lamborn is nothing more or less than a request that his party may be tried by their professions instead of their practices. Perhaps no position that the party assumes is more liable to or more deserving of exposure than this very modest request; and nothing but the unwarrantable length to which I have already extended these remarks forbids me now attempting to expose it. For the reason given, I pass it by.

I shall advert to but one more point. Mr. Lamborn refers to the late elections in the States, and from their results confidently predicts that every State in the Union will vote for Mr. Van Buren at the next presidential election. Address that argument to cowards and to knaves; with the free and the brave it will effect nothing. It may be true; if it must, let it. Many free countries have lost their liberty, and ours may lose hers; but if she shall, be it my proudest plume, not that I was the last to desert, but that I never deserted her. I know that the great vol-

cano at Washington, aroused and directed by the evil spirit that reigns there, is belching forth the lava of political corruption in a current broad and deep, which is sweeping with frightful velocity over the whole length and breadth of the land, bidding fair to leave unscathed no green spot or living thing; while on its bosom are riding, like demons on the waves of hell, the imps of that evil spirit, and fiendishly taunting all those who dare resist its destroying course with the hopelessness of their effort; and, knowing this, I cannot deny that all may be swept away. Broken by it I, too, may be; bow to it I never will. The probability that we may fall in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just; it shall not deter me. If ever I feel the soul within me elevate and expand to those dimensions not wholly unworthy of its almighty Architect, it is when I contemplate the cause of my country, deserted by all the world beside, and I standing up boldly and alone, and hurling defiance at her victorious oppressors. Here, without contemplating consequences, before high heaven and in the face of the world, I swear eternal fidelity to the just cause, as I deem it, of the land of my life, my liberty, and my love. And who that thinks with me will not fearlessly adopt the oath that I take? Let none falter who thinks he is

right, and we may succeed. But if, after all, we shall fail, be it so. We still shall have the proud consolation of saying to our consciences, and to the departed shade of our country's freedom, that the cause approved of our judgment, and adored of our hearts, in disaster, in chains, in torture, in death, we never faltered in defending.

## Letter to John T. Stuart

Springfield, December 23, 1839.

*Dear Stuart:* Dr. Henry will write you all the political news. I write this about some little matters of business. You recollect you told me you had drawn the Chicago Masack money, and sent it to the claimants. A—— hawk-billed Yankee is here besetting me at every turn I take, saying that Robert Kinzie never received the eighty dollars to which he was entitled. Can you tell anything about the matter? Again, old Mr. Wright, who lives up South Fork somewhere, is teasing me continually about some deeds which he says he left with you, but which I can find nothing of. Can you tell where they are? The legislature is in session, and has suffered the bank to forfeit its charter without benefit of clergy. There seems to be little disposition to resuscitate it.

Whenever a letter comes from you to Mrs. ——, I carry it to her, and then I see Betty; she

is a tolerable nice "fellow" now. Maybe I will write again when I get more time.

Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

P. S. The Democratic giant is here, but he is not now worth talking about. A. L.

## LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, January 1, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* There is considerable disposition, on the part of both parties in the legislature, to reinstate the law bringing on the congressional elections next summer. What motive for this the Locos have, I cannot tell. The Whigs say that the canal and other public works will stop, and consequently we shall then be clear of the foreign votes, whereas by another year they may be brought in again. The Whigs of our district say that everything is in favor of holding the election next summer, except the fact of your absence, and several of them have requested me to ask your opinion on the matter. Write me immediately what you think of it.

On the other side of this sheet I send you a copy of my Land Resolutions, which passed both branches of our legislature last winter. Will you show them to Mr. Calhoun, informing him of the fact of their passage through our legislature? Mr. Calhoun suggested a similar

proposition last winter; and perhaps if he finds himself backed by one of the States, he may be induced to take it up again. You will see by the resolutions that you and the others of our delegation in Congress are instructed to go for them. [Without signature.]

## Circular from Whig Committee, January [1?], 1840[1]

*Confidential.*

To Messrs. ——.

GENTLEMEN: In obedience to a resolution of the Whig State Convention, we have appointed you the Central Whig Committee of your county. The trust confided to you will be one of watchfulness and labor; but we hope the glory of having contributed to the overthrow of the corrupt powers that now control our beloved country will be a sufficient reward for the time and labor you will devote to it. Our Whig brethren throughout the Union have met in convention, and after due deliberation and mutual concessions have elected candidates for the presidency and vice-presidency not only worthy of our cause, but worthy of the support of every true patriot who would have our country redeemed, and her institutions honestly and faithfully

[1] Lincoln threw himself heart and soul into the campaign of 1840. Among the remarkable examples of his pen during this time is the above circular sent out by the Whig committee. It provided for a complete organization of the State.

administered. To overthrow the trained bands that are opposed to us, whose salaried officers are ever on the watch, and whose misguided followers are ever ready to obey their smallest commands, every Whig must not only know his duty, but must firmly resolve, whatever of time and labor it may cost, boldly and faithfuly to do it. Our intention is to organize the whole State, so that every Whig can be brought to the polls in the coming presidential contest. We cannot do this, however, without your co-operation; and as we do our duty, so we shall expect you to do yours. After due deliberation, the following is the plan of organization, and the duties required of each county committee:

(1) To divide their county into small districts, and to appoint in each a subcommittee, whose duty it shall be to make a perfect list of all the voters in their respective districts, and to ascertain with certainty for whom they will vote. If they meet with men who are doubtful as to the man they will support, such voters should be designated in separate lines, with the name of the man they will probably support.

(2) It will be the duty of said subcommittee to keep a constant watch on the doubtful voters, and from time to time have them talked to by those in whom they have the most confidence,

and also to place in their hands such documents as will enlighten and influence them.

(3) It will also be their duty to report to you, at least once a month, the progress they are making, and on election days see that every Whig is brought to the polls.

(4) The subcommittees should be appointed immediately; and by the last of April, at least, they should make their first report.

(5) On the first of each month hereafter we shall expect to hear from you. After the first report of your subcommittees, unless there should be found a great many doubtful voters, you can tell pretty accurately the manner in which your county will vote. In each of your letters to us, you will state the number of certain votes both for and against us, as well as the number of doubtful votes, with your opinion of the manner in which they will be cast.

(6) When we have heard from all the counties, we shall be able to tell with similar accuracy the political complexion of the State. This information will be forwarded to you as soon as received.

(7) Inclosed is a prospectus for a newspaper to be continued until after the presidential election. It will be superintended by ourselves, and every Whig in the State must take it. It will be published so low that every one can afford

it. You must raise a fund and forward us for extra copies,—every county ought to send fifty or one hundred dollars,—and the copies will be forwarded to you for distribution among our political opponents. The paper will be devoted exclusively to the great cause in which we are engaged. Procure subscriptions, and forward them to us immediately.

(8) Immediately after any election in your county, you must inform us of its results; and as early as possible after any general election we will give you the like information.

(9) A senator in Congress is to be elected by our next legislature. Let no local interests divide you; but select candidates that can succeed.

(10) Our plan of operations will of course be concealed from every one except our good friends who of right ought to know them.

Trusting much in our good cause, the strength of our candidates, and the determination of the Whigs everywhere to do their duty, we go to the work of organization in this State confident of success. We have the numbers, and if properly organized and exerted, with the gallant Harrison at our head, we shall meet our foes and conquer them in all parts of the Union.

Address your letters to Dr. A. G. Henry, R. F. Barrett, A. Lincoln, E. D. Baker, J. F. Speed.

## Letter to John T. Stuart[1]

Springfield, January 20, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* Yours of the 5th instant is received. It is the first from you for a great while. You wish the news from here. The legislature is in session yet, but has done nothing of importance. The following is my guess as to what will be done. The internal improvement system will be put down in a lump without benefit of clergy. The bank will be resuscitated with some trifling modifications. Whether the canal will go ahead or stop is very doubtful. Whether the State House will go ahead depends upon the laws already in force. A proposition made in the House to-day, to throw off to the Territory of Wisconsin about fourteen of our northern counties, decided: ayes, eleven; noes, seventy. Be sure to send me as many copies of the "Life of Harrison" as you can spare from other uses. Be very sure to procure and send me the "Senate Journal" of New York of September, 1814. I have a newspaper article which says that that document proves that Van Buren

[1] John T. Stuart was the man that advised Lincoln to study law, lent him the necessary books and finally made him his law partner. Both men ran for the legislature in 1834, and fought together in the Black Hawk War. Their friendship lasted through life.

voted against raising troops in the last war. And, in general, send me everything you think will be a good "war-club."

The nomination of Harrison takes first-rate. You know I am never sanguine; but I believe we will carry the State. The chance for doing so appears to me twenty-five per cent better than it did for you to beat Douglas. A great many of the grocery sort of Van Buren men, as formerly, are out for Harrison. Our Irish blacksmith, Gregory, is for Harrison. I believe I may say that all our friends think the chance of carrying the State very good. You have heard that the Whigs and Locos had a political discussion shortly after the meeting of the legislature. Well, I made a big speech which is in progress of printing in pamphlet form. To enlighten you and the rest of the world, I shall send you a copy when it is finished. I can't think of anything else now. Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, January 21, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* A bill bringing on the congressional elections in this State next summer has passed the House of Representatives this minute. As I think it will also pass the Senate, I take the earliest moment to advise you of it.

I do not think any one of our political friends wishes to push you off the track. Anticipating the introduction of this bill, I wrote you for your feelings on the subject several weeks since, but have received no answer. It may be that my letter miscarried; if so, will you, on the receipt of this, write me what you think and feel about the matter? Nothing new except I believe I have got our Truett debt secured. I have Truett's note at twelve months, with his brother Myers as security. Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, March 1, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* I have never seen the prospects of our party so bright in these parts as they are now. We shall carry this county by a larger majority than we did in 1836, when you ran against May. I do not think my prospects individually are very flattering, for I think it probable I shall not be permitted to be a candidate; but the party ticket will succeed triumphantly. Subscriptions to the "Old Soldier" pour in without abatement. This morning I took from the post-office a letter from Dubois inclosing the names of sixty subscribers; and on carrying it to Francis, I found he had received one hundred and forty more from other quarters

by the same day's mail. That is but an average specimen of every day's receipts. Yesterday Douglas, having chosen to consider himself insulted by something in the "Journal," undertook to cane Francis in the street. Francis caught him by the hair and jammed him back against a market-cart, where the matter ended by Francis being pulled away from him. The whole affair was so ludicrous that Francis and everybody else (Douglas excepted) have been laughing about it ever since.

I send you the names of some of the Van Buren men who have come out for Harrison about town, and suggest that you send them some documents: Moses Coffman (he let us appoint him a delegate yesterday), Aaron Coffman, George Gregory, H. M. Briggs, —— Johnson (at Birchall's book-store), Michael Glynn, —— Armstrong (not Hosea, nor Hugh, but a carpenter), Thomas Hunter, Moses Pilcher (he was always a Whig, and deserves attention), Matthew Crowder, Jr., Greenberry Smith, John Fagan, George Fagan, William Fagan (these three fell out with us about Early, and are doubtful now), John Cartmel, Noah Rickard, John Rickard, Walter Marsh (the foregoing should be addressed at Springfield). Also send some to Solomon Miller and John Auth at Saulsbury; also to Charles Harper, Samuel Harper, and B.

C. Harper; and T. J. Scroggins, John Scroggins, at Pulaski, Logan County.

Speed says he wrote you what Jo. Smith said about you as he passed here. We will procure the names of some of his people here and send them to you before long. Speed also says you must not fail to send us the New York journal he wrote for some time since. Evan Butler is jealous that you never send your compliments to him. You must not neglect him next time.

Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO JOHN T. STUART

SPRINGFIELD, March 26, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* In relation to the Kinzie matter, I can say no more than this, that the check was taken from the bank by you, and on the same day you made a note in our memorandum-book stating you had sent it by mail to Kinzie; but there is no memorandum concerning it at Irwin's. Kinzie has ceased writing about it, and consequently I have some hope that he has received it.

We have had a convention for nominating candidates in this county. Baker was put on the track for the Senate, and Bradford, Brown of the Island Grove, Josiah Francis, Darneille, and I for the House. Ninian was very much hurt

at not being nominated, but he has become tolerably well reconciled. I was much, very much, wounded myself at his being left out. The fact is, the county delegates made the nominations as they pleased; and they pleased to make them all from the country, except Baker and me, whom they supposed necessary to make stump speeches. Old Colonel Elkin is nominated for sheriff. That's right.

The Locos have no candidates on the track yet except Dick Taylor for the Senate. Last Saturday he made a speech, and May answered him. The way May let the wind out of him was a perfect wonder. The court-room was very full, and neither you nor I ever saw a crowd in this county so near all on one side, and all feeling so good, before. You will see a short account of it in the "Journal."

LINCOLN.

Japh Bell has come out for Harrison. Ain't that a caution?

## LETTER TO W. G. ANDERSON[1]

LAURENCEVILLE, October 31, 1840.

W. G. ANDERSON.

*Dear Sir:* Your note of yesterday is received. In the difficulty between us of which you speak,

[1] The letter to W. G. Anderson exemplifies the spirit of Lincoln in dealing with quarrelsome individuals. It recalls his

you say you think I was the aggressor. I do not think I was. You say my "words imported insult." I meant them as a fair set-off to your own statements, and not otherwise; and in that light alone I now wish you to understand them. You ask for my present "feelings on the subject." I entertain no unkind feelings to you, and none of any sort upon the subject, except a sincere regret that I permitted myself to get into such an altercation. Yours, etc.,

A. LINCOLN.

## RESOLUTION IN THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE, November 28, 1840

In the Illinois House of Representatives, November 28, 1840, Mr. Lincoln offered the following:

*Resolved,* That so much of the governor's message as relates to fraudulent voting, and other fraudulent practices at elections, be referred to the Committee on Elections, with instructions to said

advice given many years afterward to a young officer condemned to be court-martialed for quarreling: "No man resolved to make most of himself can spare time for personal contentions. Still less can he afford to take all the consequences, including the vitiating of his temper and the loss of self-control. Yield larger things to which you can show no more than equal right and yield lesser though clearly your own. Better give your path to a dog than be bitten by him in contesting for the right. Even killing the dog would not cure the bite."

committee to prepare and report to the House a bill for such an act as may in their judgment afford the greatest possible protection of the elective franchise against all frauds of all sorts whatever.

## Remarks in the Illinois Legislature, December 4, 1840

In the House of Representatives, Illinois, December 4, 1840, on presentation of a report respecting petition of H. N. Purple, claiming the seat of Mr. Phelps from Peoria, Mr. Lincoln moved that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole on the question, and take it up immediately. Mr. Lincoln considered the question of the highest importance, whether an individual had a right to sit in this House or not. The course he should propose would be to take up the evidence and decide upon the facts *seriatim*.

Mr. Drummond wanted time; they could not decide in the heat of debate, etc.

Mr. Lincoln thought the question had better be gone into now. In courts of law jurors were required to decide on evidence, without previous study or examination. They were required to know nothing of the subject until the evidence was laid before them for their immediate decision. He thought that the heat of party would be augmented by delay.

The Speaker called Mr. Lincoln to order as being irrelevant; no mention had been made of party heat.

Mr. Drummond said he had only spoken of debate.

Mr. Lincoln asked what caused the heat, if it was not party? Mr. Lincoln concluded by urging that the question would be decided now better than hereafter, and he thought with less heat and excitement.

(Further debate, in which Lincoln participated.)

### Remarks in the Illinois Legislature, December 4, 1840

In the Illinois House of Representatives, December 4, 1840—House in Committee of the Whole on the bill providing for payment of interest on the State debt—Mr. Lincoln moved to strike out the body and amendments of the bill, and insert in lieu thereof an amendment which in substance was that the governor be authorized to issue bonds for the payment of the interest; that these be called "interest bonds"; that the taxes accruing on Congress lands as they become taxable be irrevocably set aside and devoted as a fund to the payment of the interest bonds. Mr. Lincoln went into the reasons which appeared to him to render this plan preferable to

that of hypothecating the State bonds. By this course we could get along till the next meeting of the legislature, which was of great importance. To the objection which might be urged that these interest bonds could not be cashed, he replied that if our other bonds could, much more could these, which offered a perfect security, a fund being irrevocably set aside to provide for their redemption. To another objection that we should be paying compound interest, he would reply that the rapid growth and increase of our resources was in so great a ratio as to outstrip the difficulty; that his object was to do the best that could be done in the present emergency. All agreed that the faith of the State must be preserved; this plan appeared to him preferable to a hypothecation of bonds, which would have to be redeemed and the interest paid. How this was to be done, he could not see; therefore he had, after turning the matter over in every way, devised this measure, which would carry us on till the next legislature.

(Mr. Lincoln spoke at some length, advocating his measure.)

Lincoln advocated his measure, December 11, 1840.

December 12, 1840, he had thought some permanent provision ought to be made for the bonds to be hypothecated, but was satisfied taxa-

tion and revenue could not be connected with it now.

### Letter to John T. Stuart

Springfield, December 17, 1840.

*Dear Stuart:* McRoberts was elected senator yesterday. The vote stood: McRoberts, seventy-seven; Cyrus Edwards, fifty; E. D. Baker, one; absent, three. This affair of appointment to office is very annoying—more so to you than to me, doubtless. I am, as you know, opposed to removals to make places for our friends. Bearing this in mind, I express my preference in a few cases, as follows: For marshal, first, John Dawson; second, Dr. B. F. Edwards. For postmaster here, Dr. Henry; Carlinville, Joseph C. Howell. There is no question of the propriety of removing the postmaster at Carlinville. I have been told by so many different persons as to preclude all doubt of its truth, that he boldly refused to deliver from his office during the canvass all documents franked by Whig members of Congress.

Yours, Lincoln.

### Remarks in the Illinois Legislature, January 23, 1841

In the Illinois House of Representatives, January 23, 1841, while discussing the continuation

of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, Mr. Moore was afraid the holders of the "scrip" would lose.

Mr. Napier thought there was no danger of that; and

Mr. Lincoln said he had not examined to see what amount of scrip would probably be needed. The principal point in his mind was this, that nobody was obliged to take these certificates. It is altogether voluntary on their part, and if they apprehend it will fall on their hands, they will not take it. Further, the loss, if any there be, will fall on the citizens of that section of the country. This scrip is not going to circulate over an extensive range of country, but will be confined chiefly to the vicinity of the canal. Now, we find the representatives of that section of the country are all in favor of the bill. When we propose to protect their interests, they say to us: Leave us to take care of ourselves; we are willing to run the risk. And this is reasonable; we must suppose they are competent to protect their own interests, and it is only fair to let them do it.

## Letter to John T. Stuart[1]

Springfield, Illinois, January 23, 1841.

*Dear Stuart:* Yours of the 3d instant is received, and I proceed to answer it as well as I

[1] Such profound depression as expressed in this letter to Stuart was not at all uncommon in Lincoln's life. His melancholy

can, though from the deplorable state of my mind at this time, I fear I shall give you but little satisfaction. About the matter of the congressional election, I can only tell you that there is a bill now before the Senate adopting the general ticket system; but whether the party have fully determined on its adoption is yet uncertain. There is no sign of opposition to you among our friends, and none that I can learn among our enemies; though of course there will be if the general ticket be adopted. The "Chicago American," "Peoria Register," and "Sangamon Journal" have already hoisted our flag upon their own responsibility, and the other Whig papers of the district are expected to follow immediately. On last evening there was a meeting of our friends at Butler's, and I submitted the question to them, and found them unanimously in favor of having you announced as a candidate. A few of us this morning, however, concluded that as you were already being announced in the papers, we would delay announcing you, as by your own authority, for a week or two. We thought that to appear too keen about it might spur our opponents on about

in 1841 took rise from the breaking of his engagement with Miss Mary Todd, whom he was to have married January first of that year. Lincoln himself put off the wedding, fearing the crucial step. Almost two years later Miss Todd and Lincoln were eventually married.

their general ticket project. Upon the whole, I think I may say with certainty that your re-election is sure, if it be in the power of the Whigs to make it so.

For not giving you a general summary of news, you must pardon me; it is not in my power to do so. I am now the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on the earth. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell; I awfully forbode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible; I must die or be better, it appears to me. The matter you speak of on my account you may attend to as you say, unless you shall hear of my condition forbidding it. I say this because I fear I shall be unable to attend to any business here, and a change of scene might help me. If I could be myself, I would rather remain at home with Judge Logan. I can write no more. Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## Circular from Whig Committee, February [8?], 1841

*Appeal to the People of the State of Illinois.*

FELLOW-CITIZENS: When the General Assembly, now about adjourning, assembled in November last, from the bankrupt state of the public treasury, the pecuniary embarrassments prevailing in every department of society, the dilapidated state of the public works, and the impending danger of the degradation of the State, you had a right to expect that your representatives would lose no time in devising and adopting measures to avert threatened calamities, alleviate the distresses of the people, and allay the fearful apprehensions in regard to the future prosperity of the State. It was not expected by you that the spirit of party would take the lead in the councils of the State, and make every interest bend to its demands. Nor was it expected that any party would assume to itself the entire control of legislation, and convert the means and offices of the State, and the substance of the people, into aliment for party subsistence. Neither could it

have been expected by you that party spirit, however strong its desires and unreasonable its demands, would have passed the sanctuary of the Constitution, and entered with its unhallowed and hideous form into the formation of the judiciary system.

At the early period of the session, measures were adopted by the dominant party to take possesssion of the State, to fill all public offices with party men, and make every measure affecting the interests of the people and the credit of the State operate in furtherance of their party views. The merits of men and measures therefore became the subject of discussion in caucus, instead of the halls of legislation, and decisions there made by a minority of the legislature have been executed and carried into effect by the force of party discipline, without any regard whatever to the rights of the people or the interests of the State. The Supreme Court of the State was organized, and judges appointed, according to the provisions of the Constitution, in 1824. The people have never complained of the organization of that court; no attempt has ever before been made to change that department. Respect for public opinion, and regard for the rights and liberties of the people, have hitherto restrained the spirit of party from attacks upon the independence and integrity of the judiciary. The

same judges have continued in office since 1824; their decisions have not been the subject of complaint among the people; the integrity and honesty of the court have not been questioned, and it has never been supposed that the court has ever permitted party prejudice or party considerations to operate upon their decisions. The court was made to consist of four judges, and by the Constitution two form a quorum for the transaction of business. With this tribunal, thus constituted, the people have been satisfied for near sixteen years. The same law which organized the Supreme Court in 1824 also established and organized circuit courts to be held in each county in the State, and five circuit judges were appointed to hold those courts. In 1826 the legislature abolished these circuit courts, repealed the judges out of office, and required the judges of the Supreme Court to hold the circuit courts. The reasons assigned for this change were, first, that the business of the country could be better attended to by the four judges of the Supreme Court than by the two sets of judges; and, second, the state of the public treasury forbade the employment of unnecessary officers. In 1828 a circuit was established north of the Illinois River, in order to meet the wants of the people, and a circuit judge was appointed to hold the courts in that circuit.

In 1834 the circuit-court system was again established throughout the State, circuit judges appointed to hold the courts, and the judges of the Supreme Court were relieved from the performance of circuit court duties. The change was recommended by the then acting governor of the State, General W. L. D. Ewing, in the following terms:

The augmented population of the State, the multiplied number of organized counties, as well as the increase of business in all, has long since convinced every one conversant with this department of our government of the indispensable necessity of an alteration in our judiciary system, and the subject is therefore recommended to the earnest patriotic consideration of the legislature. The present system has never been exempt from serious and weighty objections. The idea of appealing from the circuit court to the same judges in the Supreme Court is recommended by little hopes of redress to the injured party below. The duties of the circuit, too, it may be added, consume one half of the year, leaving a small and inadequate portion of time (when that required for domestic purposes is deducted) to erect, in the decisions of the Supreme Court, a judicial monument of legal learning and research, which the talent and ability of the court might otherwise be entirely competent to.

With this organization of circuit courts the

people have never complained. The only complaints which we have heard have come from circuits which were so large that the judges could not dispose of the business, and the circuits in which Judges Pearson and Ralston lately presided.

Whilst the honor and credit of the State demanded legislation upon the subject of the public debt, the canal, the unfinished public works, and the embarrassments of the people, the judiciary stood upon a basis which required no change—no legislative action. Yet the party in power, neglecting every interest requiring legislative action, and wholly disregarding the rights, wishes, and interests of the people, has, for the unholy purpose of providing places for its partizans and supplying them with large salaries, disorganized that department of the government. Provision is made for the election of five party judges of the Supreme Court, the proscription of four circuit judges, and the appointment of party clerks in more than half the counties of the State. Men professing respect for public opinion, and acknowledged to be leaders of the party, have avowed in the halls of legislation that the change in the judiciary was intended to produce political results favorable to their party and party friends. The immutable principles of justice are to make way

for party interests, and the bonds of social order are to be rent in twain, in order that a desperate faction may be sustained at the expense of the people. The change proposed in the judiciary was supported upon grounds so destructive to the institutions of the country, and so entirely at war with the rights and liberties of the people, that the party could not secure entire unanimity in its support,—three Democrats of the Senate and five of the House voting against the measure. They were unwilling to see the temples of justice and the seats of independent judges occupied by the tools of faction. The declarations of the party leaders, the selection of party men for judges, and the total disregard for the public will in the adoption of the measure, prove conclusively that the object has been not reform, but destruction; not the advancement of the highest interests of the State, but the predominance of party.

We cannot in this manner undertake to point out all the objections to this party measure; we present you with those stated by the Council of Revision upon returning the bill, and we ask for them a candid consideration.

Believing that the independence of the judiciary has been destroyed, that hereafter our courts will be independent of the people, and entirely dependent upon the legislature; that our

rights of property and liberty of conscience can no longer be regarded as safe from the encroachments of unconstitutional legislation; and knowing of no other remedy which can be adopted consistently with the peace and good order of society, we call upon you to avail yourselves of the opportunity afforded, and, at the next general election, vote for a convention of the people.

S. H. LITTLE,
E. D. BAKER,
J. J. HARDIN,
E. B. WEBB,
A. LINCOLN,
J. GILLESPIE,

*Committee on behalf of the Whig members of the Legislature.*

## EXTRACT FROM A PROTEST IN THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE AGAINST THE REORGANIZATION OF THE JUDICIARY, February 26, 1841

For the reason thus presented, and for others no less apparent, the undersigned cannot assent to the passage of the bill, or permit it to become a law, without this evidence of their disapprobation; and they now protest against the reorganization of the judiciary, because—(1) It violates the great principles of free government by subjecting the judiciary to the legislature. (2) It is a fatal blow at the independence of the

judges and the constitutional term of their office. (3) It is a measure not asked for, or wished for, by the people. (4) It will greatly increase the expense of our courts, or else greatly diminish their utility. (5) It will give our courts a political and partizan character, thereby impairing public confidence in their decisions. (6) It will impair our standing with other States and the world. (7) It is a party measure for party purposes, from which no practical good to the people can possibly arise, but which may be the source of immeasurable evils.

The undersigned are well aware that this protest will be altogether unavailing with the majority of this body. The blow has already fallen, and we are compelled to stand by, the mournful spectators of the ruin it will cause.

Signed by 35 members, among whom was Abraham Lincoln.

## Letter to Joshua F. Speed

Springfield, June 19, 1841.

DEAR SPEED: We have had the highest state of excitement here for a week past that our community has ever witnessed; and although the public feeling is somewhat allayed, the curious affair which aroused it is very far from being even yet cleared of mystery. It would take a quire of paper to give you anything like a full account of it, and I therefore only propose a brief outline. The chief personages in the drama are Archibald Fisher, supposed to be murdered, and Archibald Trailor, Henry Trailor, and William Trailor, supposed to have murdered him. The three Trailors are brothers; the first, Arch., as you know, lives in town; the second, Henry, in Clary's Grove; and the third, William, in Warren County; and Fisher, the supposed murdered, being without a family, had made his home with William. On Saturday evening, being the 29th of May, Fisher and William came to Henry's in a one-horse dearborn, and there stayed over Sunday; and on Monday all three came to Springfield (Henry on

horseback), and joined Archibald at Myers's, the Dutch carpenter. That evening at supper Fisher was missing, and so next morning some ineffectual search was made for him; and on Tuesday, at one o'clock P. M. William and Henry started home without him. In a day or two Henry and one or two of his Clary Grove neighbors came back for him again, and advertised his disappearance in the papers. The knowledge of the matter thus far had not been general, and here it dropped entirely, till about the 10th instant, when Keys received a letter from the postmaster in Warren County, that William had arrived at home, and was telling a very mysterious and improbable story about the disappearance of Fisher, which induced the community there to suppose he had been disposed of unfairly. Keys made this letter public, which immediately set the whole town and adjoining county agog. And so it has continued until yesterday. The mass of the people commenced a systematic search for the dead body, while Wickersham was despatched to arrest Henry Trailor at the Grove, and Jim Maxcy to Warren to arrest William. On Monday last, Henry was brought in, and showed an evident inclination to insinuate that he knew Fisher to be dead, and that Arch. and William had killed him. He said he guessed the body could be

found in Spring Creek, between the Beardstown road and Hickox's mill. Away the people swept like a herd of buffalo, and cut down Hickox's mill-dam *nolens volens,* to draw the water out of the pond, and then went up and down and down and up the creek, fishing and raking, and raking and ducking, and diving for two days, and, after all, no dead body found.

In the mean time a sort of scuffling-ground had been found in the brush in the angle, or point, where the road leading into the woods past the brewery and the one leading in past the brick-yard meet. From the scuffle-ground was the sign of something about the size of a man having been dragged to the edge of the thicket, where it joined the track of some small-wheeled carriage drawn by one horse, as shown by the road-tracks. The carriage-track led off toward Spring Creek. Near this drag-trail Dr. Merryman found two hairs, which, after a long scientific examination, he pronounced to be triangular human hair, which term, he says, includes within it the whiskers, the hair growing under the arms and on other parts of the body; and he judged that these two were of the whiskers, because the ends were cut, showing that they had flourished in the neighborhood of the razor's operations. On Thursday last Jim Maxcy brought in William Trailor from War-

ren. On the same day Arch. was arrested and put in jail. Yesterday (Friday) William was put upon his examining trial before May and Lovely. Archibald and Henry were both present. Lamborn prosecuted, and Logan, Baker, and your humble servant defended. A great many witnesses were introduced and examined, but I shall only mention those whose testimony seemed most important. The first of these was Captain Ransdell. He swore that when William and Henry left Springfield for home on Tuesday before mentioned, they did not take the direct route,—which, you know, leads by the butcher shop,—but that they followed the street north until they got opposite, or nearly opposite, May's new house, after which he could not see them from where he stood; and it was afterward proved that in about an hour after they started, they came into the street by the butcher shop from toward the brick-yard. Dr. Merryman and others swore to what is stated about the scuffle-ground, drag-trail, whiskers, and carriage-tracks. Henry was then introduced by the prosecution. He swore that when they started for home, they went out north, as Ransdell stated, and turned down west by the brick-yard into the woods, and there met Archibald; that they proceeded a small distance farther, when he was placed as a sentinel to

watch for and announce the approach of any one that might happen that way; that William and Arch. took the dearborn out of the road a small distance to the edge of the thicket, where they stopped, and he saw them lift the body of a man into it; that they then moved off with the carriage in the direction of Hickox's mill, and he loitered about for something like an hour, when William returned with the carriage, but without Arch., and said they had put him in a safe place; that they went somehow—he did not know exactly how—into the road close to the brewery, and proceeded on to Clary's Grove. He also stated that some time during the day William told him that he and Arch. had killed Fisher the evening before; that the way they did it was by him (William) knocking him down with a club, and Arch. then choking him to death.

An old man from Warren, called Dr. Gilmore, was then introduced on the part of the defense. He swore that he had known Fisher for several years; that Fisher had resided at his house a long time at each of two different spells —once while he built a barn for him, and once while he was doctored for some chronic disease; that two or three years ago Fisher had a serious hurt in his head by the bursting of a gun, since which he had been subject to continued bad

health and occasional aberration of mind. He also stated that on last Tuesday, being the same day that Maxcy arrested William Trailor, he (the doctor) was from home in the early part of the day, and on his return, about eleven o'clock, found Fisher at his house in bed, and apparently very unwell; that he asked him how he came from Springfield; that Fisher said he had come by Peoria, and also told of several other places he had been at more in the direction of Peoria, which showed that he at the time of speaking did not know where he had been wandering about in a state of derangement. He further stated that in about two hours he received a note from one of Trailor's friends, advising him of his arrest, and requesting him to go on to Springfield as a witness, to testify as to the state of Fisher's health in former times; that he immediately set off, calling up two of his neighbors as company, and, riding all evening and all night, overtook Maxcy and William at Lewiston in Fulton County; that Maxcy refusing to discharge Trailor upon his statement, his two neighbors returned and he came on to Springfield. Some question being made as to whether the doctor's story was not a fabrication, several acquaintances of his (among whom was the same postmaster who wrote Keys, as before mentioned) were introduced as sort of compur-

gators, who swore that they knew the doctor to be of good character for truth and veracity, and generally of good character in every way. Here the testimony ended, and the Trailors were discharged, Arch. and William expressing both in word and manner their entire confidence that Fisher would be found alive at the doctor's by Galloway, Mallory, and Myers, who a day before had been despatched for that purpose; while Henry still protested that no power on earth could ever show Fisher alive. Thus stands this curious affair. When the doctor's story was first made public, it was amusing to scan and contemplate the countenances and hear the remarks of those who had been actively in search for the dead body: some looked quizzical, some melancholy, and some furiously angry. Porter, who had been very active, swore he always knew the man was not dead, and that he had not stirred an inch to hunt for him; Langford, who had taken the lead in cutting down Hickox's mill-dam, and wanted to hang Hickox for objecting, looked most awfully woebegone: he seemed the "victim of unrequited affection," as represented in the comic almanacs we used to laugh over; and Hart, the little drayman that hauled Molly home once, said it was too *damned* bad to have so much trouble, and no hanging after all.

I commenced this letter on yesterday, since

which I received yours of the 13th. I stick to my promise to come to Louisville. Nothing new here except what I have written. I have not seen —— since my last trip, and I am going out there as soon as I mail this letter.

Yours forever, LINCOLN.

## STATEMENT ABOUT HARRY WILTON, June 25, 1841

It having been charged in some of the public prints that Harry Wilton, late United States marshal for the district of Illinois, had used his office for political effect, in the appointment of deputies for the taking of the census for the year 1840, we, the undersigned, were called upon by Mr. Wilton to examine the papers in his possession relative to these appointments, and to ascertain therefrom the correctness or incorrectness of such charge.

We accompanied Mr. Wilton to a room, and examined the matter as fully as we could with the means afforded us. The only sources of information bearing on the subject which were submitted to us, were the letters, etc., recommending and opposing the various appointments made, and Mr. Wilton's verbal statements concerning the same. From these letters, etc., it appears that in some instances appointments were made in accordance with the recommenda-

tions of leading Whigs, and in opposition to those of leading Democrats; among which instances the appointments at Scott, Wayne, Madison and Lawrence are the strongest. According to Mr. Wilton's statement, of the seventy-six appointments we examined, fifty-four were of Democrats, eleven of Whigs, and eleven of unknown politics.

The chief ground of complaint against Mr. Wilton, as we had understood it, was because of his appointment of so many Democratic candidates for the legislature, thus giving them a decided advantage over their Whig opponents; and consequently our attention was directed rather particularly to that point. We found that there were many such appointments, among which were these in Tazewell, McLean, Iroquois, Coles, Menard, Wayne, Washington, Fayette, etc.; and we did not learn that there was one instance in which a Whig candidate for the legislature had been appointed. There was no written evidence before us showing us at what time those appointments were made; but Mr. Wilton stated that they all, with one exception, were made before those appointed became candidates for the legislature, and the letters, etc., recommending them all bear date before, and most of them long before, those appointed were publicly announced candidates.

We give the foregoing naked facts, and draw no conclusions from them.

BENJ. S. EDWARDS,
A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO MISS MARY SPEED[1]

BLOOMINGTON, ILL., September 27, 1841.

MISS MARY SPEED, Louisville, Ky.

*My Friend:* Having resolved to write to some of your mother's family, and not having the express permission of any one of them to do so, I have had some little difficulty in determining on which to inflict the task of reading what I now feel must be a most dull and silly letter; but when I remembered that you and I were something of cronies while I was at Farmington, and that while there I was under the necessity of shutting you up in a room to prevent your committing an assault and battery upon me, I instantly decided that you should be the devoted one. I assume that you have not heard from Joshua and myself since we left, because I think it doubtful whether he has written. You re-

[1] Lincoln was returning from a visit to the home of the Speeds in Kentucky when he penned the picture of cheerful slaves. But Lincoln had seen the darker side of the picture years before while visiting New Orleans. John Hanks, his cousin, said it was then and there that he conceived an undying horror of the slave system.

member there was some uneasiness about Joshua's health when we left. That little indisposition of his turned out to be nothing serious, and it was pretty nearly forgotten when we reached Springfield. We got on board the steamboat *Lebanon* in the locks of the canal, about twelve o'clock M. of the day we left, and reached St. Louis the next Monday at 8 P. M. Nothing of interest happened during the passage, except the vexatious delays occasioned by the sand-bars be thought interesting. By the way, a fine example was presented on board the boat for contemplating the effect of condition upon human happiness. A gentleman had purchased twelve negroes in different parts of Kentucky, and was taking them to a farm in the South. They were chained six and six together. A small iron clevis was around the left wrist of each, and this was fastened to the main chain by a shorter one, at a convenient distance from the others, so that the negroes were strung together precisely like so many fish upon a trot-line. In this condition they were being separated forever from the scenes of their childhood, their friends, their fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters, and many of them from their wives and children, and going into perpetual slavery, where the lash of the master is proverbially more ruthless and unrelenting than

any other where; and yet amid all these distressing circumstances, as we would think them, they were the most cheerful and apparently happy creatures on board. One whose offense for which he had been sold was an over-fondness for his wife, played the fiddle almost continually, and the others danced, sang, cracked jokes, and played various games with cards from day to day. How true it is that "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," or in other words, that he renders the worst of human conditions tolerable, while he permits the best to be nothing better than tolerable. To return to the narrative. When we reached Springfield, I stayed but one day, when I started on this tedious circuit where I now am. Do you remember my going to the city, while I was in Kentucky, to have a tooth extracted, and making a failure of it? Well, that same old tooth got to paining me so much that about a week since I had it torn out, bringing with it a bit of the jaw-bone, the consequence of which is that my mouth is now so sore that I can neither talk nor eat.

I am literally "subsisting on savory remembrances"—that is, being unable to eat, I am living upon the remembrance of the delicious dishes of peaches and cream we used to have at your house. When we left, Miss Fanny Henning was owing you a visit, as I understood.

Has she paid it yet? If she has, are you not convinced that she is one of the sweetest girls in the world? There is but one thing about her, so far as I could perceive, that I would have otherwise than as it is—that is, something of a tendency to melancholy. This, let it be observed, is a misfortune, not a fault.

Give her an assurance of my very highest regard when you see her. Is little Siss Eliza Davis at your house yet? If she is, kiss her "o'er and o'er again" for me.

Tell your mother that I have not got her "present" [an "Oxford" Bible] with me, but I intend to read it regularly when I return home. I doubt not that it is really, as she says, the best cure for the blues, could one but take it according to the truth. Give my respects to all your sisters (including Aunt Emma) and brothers. Tell Mrs. Peay, of whose happy face I shall long retain a pleasant remembrance, that I have been trying to think of a name for her homestead, but as yet cannot satisfy myself with one. I shall be very happy to receive a line from you soon after you receive this, and in case you choose to favor me with one, address it to Charleston, Coles County, Ill., as I shall be there about the time to receive it. Your sincere friend,

A. LINCOLN.

## Call for Whig State Convention, October 20, 1841

The undersigned, acting, as is believed, in accordance with the wishes of the Whig party, and in compliance with their duties as the Whig Central Committee of this State, appoint the third Monday of December next for the meeting of a Whig State Convention, at Springfield, for the purpose of nominating candidates for the offices of Governor and Lieutenant-Governor of this State for the coming election.

It is recommended that the number of delegates to the convention shall conform to the number of representatives entitled under the new apportionment; but that in all cases every county shall be entitled to one delegate.

We would urge upon our political friends in the different counties to call meetings immediately for the election of delegates.

It is ardently hoped that the counties will be fully represented, in order that the will of the people may be expressed in the selection of candidates.

A. G. Henry, J. F. Speed, A. Lincoln,
E. D. Baker, Wm. L. May,
*Whig State Central Committee.*

Springfield, Oct. 20, 1841.

## Letter to Joshua F. Speed, January [3?], 1842.[1]

*My dear Speed:* Feeling, as you know I do, the deepest solicitude for the success of the enterprise you are engaged in, I adopt this as the last method I can adopt to aid you, in case (which God forbid!) you shall need any aid. I do not place what I am going to say on paper because I can say it better that way than I could by word of mouth, but, were I to say it orally before we part, most likely you would forget it at the very time when it might do you some good. As I think it reasonable that you will feel very badly some time between this and the final consummation of your purpose, it is intended that you shall read this just at such a time. Why I say it is reasonable that you will feel very badly yet, is because of three special causes added to the general one which I shall mention.

The general cause is, that you are naturally of a nervous temperament; and this I say from what I have seen of you personally, and what you have told me concerning your mother at

[1] Speed was Lincoln's room-mate at Springfield for four years, and the most intimate friend he ever made. Herndon, one of Lincoln's biographers, succeeded with great difficulty in obtaining their correspondence from Speed, and not then until after several erasures. Lincoln appointed Joshua's brother John attorney-general of the United States in 1864.

various times, and concerning your brother William at the time his wife died. The first special cause is your exposure to bad weather on your journey, which my experience clearly proves to be very severe on defective nerves. The second is the absence of all business and conversation of friends, which might divert your mind, give it occasional rest from the intensity of thought which will sometimes wear the sweetest idea threadbare and turn it to the bitterness of death. The third is the rapid and near approach of that crisis on which all your thoughts and feelings concentrate.

If from all these causes you shall escape and go through triumphantly, without another "twinge of the soul," I shall be most happily but most egregiously deceived. If, on the contrary, you shall, as I expect you will at some time, be agonized and distressed, let me, who have some reason to speak with judgment on such a subject, beseech you to ascribe it to the causes I have mentioned, and not to some false and ruinous suggestion of the Devil.

"But," you will say, "do not your causes apply to every one engaged in a like undertaking?" By no means. The particular causes, to a greater or less extent perhaps, do apply in all cases; but the general one,—nervous debility, which is the key and conductor of all the particular ones,

and without which they would be utterly harmless,—though it does pertain to you, does not pertain to one in a thousand. It is out of this that the painful difference between you and the mass of the world springs.

I know what the painful point with you is at all times when you are unhappy; it is an apprehension that you do not love her as you should. What nonsense! How came you to court her? Was it because you thought she deserved it, and that you had given her reason to expect it? If it was for that, why did not the same reason make you court Ann Todd, and at least twenty others of whom you can think, and to whom it would apply with greater force than to her? Did you court her for her wealth? Why, you know she had none. But you say you reasoned yourself into it. What do you mean by that? Was it not that you found yourself unable to reason yourself out of it? Did you not think, and partly form the purpose, of courting her the first time you ever saw her or heard of her? What had reason to do with it at that early stage? There was nothing at that time for reason to work upon. Whether she was moral, amiable, sensible, or even of good character, you did not, nor could then know, except, perhaps, you might infer the last from the company you found her in.

All you then did or could know of her was her personal appearance and deportment; and these, if they impress at all, impress the heart, and not the head.

Say candidly, were not those heavenly black eyes the whole basis of all your early reasoning on the subject? After you and I had once been at the residence, did you not go and take me all the way to Lexington and back, for no other purpose but to get to see her again, on our return on that evening to take a trip for that express object? What earthly consideration would you take to find her scouting and despising you, and giving herself up to another? But of this you have no apprehension; and therefore you cannot bring it home to your feelings.

I shall be so anxious about you that I shall want you to write by every mail. Your friend,

LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO JOSHUA F. SPEED

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, February 3, 1842.

*Dear Speed:* Your letter of the 25th January came to hand to-day. You well know that I do not feel my own sorrows much more keenly than I do yours, when I know of them; and yet I assure you I was not much hurt by what you wrote me of your excessively bad feeling at the time you wrote. Not that I am less capable of sym-

pathizing with you now than ever, not that I am less your friend than ever, but because I hope and believe that your present anxiety and distress about her health and her life must and will forever banish those horrid doubts which I know you sometimes felt as to the truth of your affection for her. If they can once and forever be removed (and I almost feel a presentiment that the Almighty has sent your present affliction expressly for that object), surely nothing can come in their stead to fill their immeasurable measure of misery. The death-scenes of those we love are surely painful enough; but these we are prepared for and expect to see: they happen to all, and all know they must happen. Painful as they are, they are not an unlooked-for sorrow. Should she, as you fear, be destined to an early grave, it is indeed a great consolation to know that she is so well prepared to meet it. Her religion, which you once disliked so much, I will venture you now prize most highly. But I hope your melancholy bodings as to her early death are not well founded. I even hope that ere this reaches you she will have returned with improved and still improving health, and that you will have met her, and forgotten the sorrows of the past in the enjoyments of the present. I would say more if I could, but it seems that I have said enough. It really

appears to me that you yourself ought to rejoice, and not sorrow, at this indubitable evidence of your undying affection for her. Why, Speed, if you did not love her, although you might not wish her death, you would most certainly be resigned to it. Perhaps this point is no longer a question with you, and my pertinacious dwelling upon it is a rude intrusion upon your feelings. If so, you must pardon me. You know the hell I have suffered on that point, and how tender I am upon it. You know I do not mean wrong. I have been quite clear of "hypo" since you left; even better than I was along in the fall. I have seen —— but once. She seemed very cheerful, and so I said nothing to her about what we spoke of.

Old Uncle Billy Herndon is dead, and it is said this evening that Uncle Ben Ferguson will not live. This, I believe, is all the news, and enough at that unless it were better. Write me immediately on the receipt of this. Your friend, as ever,

LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO JOSHUA F. SPEED

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, February 13, 1842.

*Dear Speed:* Yours of the 1st instant came to hand three or four days ago. When this shall reach you, you will have been Fanny's husband

several days. You know my desire to befriend you is everlasting; that I will never cease while I know how to do anything. But you will always hereafter be on ground that I have never occupied, and consequently, if advice were needed, I might advise wrong. I do fondly hope, however, that you will never again need any comfort from abroad. But should I be mistaken in this, should excessive pleasure still be accompanied with a painful counterpart at times, still let me urge you, as I have ever done, to remember, in the depth and even agony of despondency, that very shortly you are to feel well again. I am now fully convinced that you love her as ardently as you are capable of loving. Your ever being happy in her presence, and your intense anxiety about her health, if there were nothing else, would place this beyond all dispute in my mind. I incline to think it probable that your nerves will fail you occasionally for a while; but once you get them firmly guarded now, that trouble is over forever. I think, if I were you, in case my mind were not exactly right, I would avoid being idle. I would immediately engage in some business, or go to making preparations for it, which would be the same thing. If you went through the ceremony calmly, or even with sufficient composure not to excite alarm in any present, you are safe beyond

question, and in two or three months, to say the most, will be the happiest of men.

I would desire you to give my particular respects to Fanny; but perhaps you will not wish her to know you have received this, lest she should desire to see it. Make her write me an answer to my last letter to her; at any rate, I would set great value upon a note or letter from her. Write me whenever you have leisure.

Yours forever,

A. LINCOLN.

P. S. I have been quite a man since you left.

## *LETTER TO G. B. SHELEDY

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., Feb. 16, 1842.

G. B. SHELEDY, ESQR.

Yours of the 10th is duly received. Judge Logan and myself are doing business together now, and we are willing to attend to your cases as you propose. As to the terms, we are willing to attend each case you prepare and send us for $10 (when there shall be no opposition) to be sent in advance, or you know that it is safe. It takes $5.75 of cost to start upon, that is, $1.75 to clerk, and $2 to each of two publishers of papers. Judge Logan thinks it will take the balance of $20 to carry a case through. This must be advanced from time to time as the services are performed, as the officers will not act

without. I do not know whether you can be admitted an attorney of the Federal court in your absence or not; nor is it material, as the business can be done in our names.

Thinking it may aid you a little, I send you one of our blank forms of Petitions. It, you will see, is framed to be sworn to before the Federal court clerk, and, in your cases, will have (to) be so far changed, as to be sworn to before the clerk of your circuit court; and his certificate must be accompanied with his official seal. The schedules too, must be attended to. Be sure that they contain the *creditors* names, their *residences,* the *amounts* due each, the *debtors* names, their *residences,* and the amounts they owe, also all property and where located.

Also be sure that the schedules are signed by the applicants as well as the Petition.

Publication will have to be made here in one paper, and in one nearest the residence of the applicant. Write us in each case where the last advertisement is to be sent, whether to you or to what paper.

I believe I have now said everything that can be of any advantage.

Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## *Extracts of a Letter to George E. Pickett.

February 22, 1842.

To George E. Pickett.

. . . . . .

I never encourage deceit, and falsehood, especially if you have got a bad memory, is the *worst* enemy a fellow can have. The fact is truth is your truest friend, no matter what the circumstances are. Notwithstanding this copy-book preamble, my boy, I am inclined to suggest a *little prudence* on your part. You see I have a congenital aversion to failure, and the sudden announcement to your Uncle Andrew of the success of your "lamp-rubbing" might possibly prevent your passing the severe *physical* examination to which you will be subjected in order to enter the Military Academy. You see, I should like to have a perfect soldier credited to dear old Illinois—no broken bones, scalp wounds, etc. So I think perhaps it might be wise to hand this letter from me, in to your good uncle through his room-window *after* he has had a *comfortable dinner,* and watch its effect from the top of the pigeon-house.

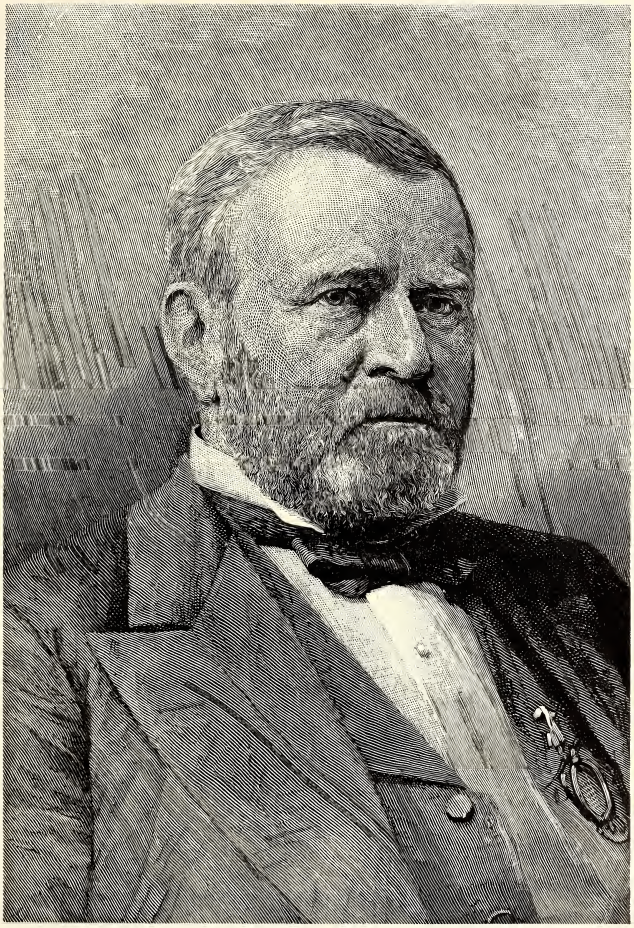
. . . . . .

I have just told the folks here in Springfield on this 110th anniversary of the birth of him

whose name, mightiest in the cause of civil liberty, still mightiest in the cause of moral reformation, we mention in solemn awe, in naked, deathless splendor, that the one victory we can ever call complete will be that one which proclaims that there is not one slave or one drunkard on the face of God's green earth. Recruit for this victory.

. . . . . .

Now, boy, on your march, don't you go and forget the old maxim that "one drop of honey catches more flies than a half-gallon of gall." Load your musket with this maxim, and smoke it in your pipe.



General Ulysses S. Grant

*Wood Engraving from the Original Photograph by Brady.*

## Address before the Springfield Washingtonian Temperance Society, February 22, 1842[1]

ALTHOUGH the temperance cause has been in progress for near twenty years, it is apparent to all that it is just now being crowned with a degree of success hitherto unparalleled.

The list of its friends is daily swelled by the additions of fifties, of hundreds, and of thousands. The cause itself seems suddenly transformed from a cold abstract theory to a living, breathing, active, and powerful chieftain, going forth "conquering and to conquer." The citadels of his great adversary are daily being stormed and dismantled; his temple and his altars, where the rites of his idolatrous worship have long been performed, and where human sacrifices have long been wont to be made, are daily desecrated and deserted. The triumph of

[1] The feeling against intemperance which caused Lincoln to become a member of the Springfield Washingtonian Temperance Society never altered throughout his life, though it never affected his toleration towards drunkards and drunkenness. This address was not popular with temperance advocates because of the observation that hard drinkers may be the equals in head and heart of their sober brothers.

the conqueror's fame is sounding from hill to hill, from sea to sea, and from land to land, and calling millions to his standard at a blast.

For this new and splendid success we heartily rejoice. That that success is so much greater now than heretofore is doubtless owing to rational causes; and if we would have it continue, we shall do well to inquire what those causes are.

The warfare heretofore waged against the demon intemperance has somehow or other been erroneous. Either the champions engaged or the tactics they adopted have not been the most proper. These champions for the most part have been preachers, lawyers, and hired agents. Between these and the mass of mankind there is a want of approachability, if the term be admissible, partially, at least, fatal to their success. They are supposed to have no sympathy of feeling or interest with those very persons whom it is their object to convince and persuade.

And again, it is so common and so easy to ascribe motives to men of these classes other than those they profess to act upon. The preacher, it is said, advocates temperance because he is a fanatic, and desires a union of the church and state; the lawyer from his pride and vanity of hearing himself speak; and the hired agent for

his salary. But when one who has long been known as a victim of intemperance bursts the fetters that have bound him, and appears before his neighbors "clothed and in his right mind," a redeemed specimen of long-lost humanity, and stands up, with tears of joy trembling in his eyes, to tell of the miseries once endured, now to be endured no more forever; of his once naked and starving children, now clad and fed comfortably; of a wife long weighed down with woe, weeping, and a broken heart, now restored to health, happiness, and a renewed affection; and how easily it is all done, once it is resolved to be done; how simple his language!—there is a logic and an eloquence in it that few with human feelings can resist. They cannot say that he desires a union of church and state, for he is not a church member; they cannot say he is vain of hearing himself speak, for his whole demeanor shows he would gladly avoid speaking at all; they cannot say he speaks for pay, for he receives none, and asks for none. Nor can his sincerity in any way be doubted, or his sympathy for those he would persuade to imitate his example be denied.

In my judgment, it is to the battles of this new class of champions that our late success is greatly, perhaps chiefly, owing. But, had the old-school champions themselves been of the

most wise selecting, was their system of tactics the most judicious? It seems to me it was not. Too much denunciation against dram-sellers and dram-drinkers was indulged in. This I think was both impolitic and unjust. It was impolitic, because it is not much in the nature of man to be driven to anything; still less to be driven about that which is exclusively his own business; and least of all where such driving is to be submitted to at the expense of pecuniary interest or burning appetite. When the dram-seller and drinker were incessantly told—not in accents of entreaty and persuasion, diffidently addressed by erring man to an erring brother, but in the thundering tones of anathema and denunciation with which the lordly judge often groups together all the crimes of the felon's life, and thrusts them in his face just ere he passes sentence of death upon him—that they were the authors of all the vice and misery and crime in the land; that they were the manufacturers and material of all the thieves and robbers and murderers that infest the earth; that their houses were the workshops of the devil; and that their persons should be shunned by all the good and virtuous, as moral pestilences—I say, when they were told all this, and in this way, it is not wonderful that they were slow, very slow, to acknowledge the truth of such denunciations, and to join the ranks of

their denouncers in a hue and cry against themselves.

To have expected them to do otherwise than they did—to have expected them not to meet denunciation with denunciation, crimination with crimination, and anathema with anathema —was to expect a reversal of human nature, which is God's decree and can never be reversed.

When the conduct of men is designed to be influenced, persuasion, kind, unassuming persuasion, should ever be adopted. It is an old and a true maxim "that a drop of honey catches more flies than a gallon of gall." So with men. If you would win a man to your cause, first convince him that you are his sincere friend. Therein is a drop of honey that catches his heart, which, say what he will, is the great highroad to his reason, and which, when once gained, you will find but little trouble in convincing his judgment of the justice of your cause, if indeed that cause really be a just one. On the contrary, assume to dictate to his judgment, or to command his action, or to mark him as one to be shunned and despised, and he will retreat within himself, close all the avenues to his head and his heart; and though your cause be naked truth itself, transformed to the heaviest lance, harder than steel, and sharper than steel can be made, and though you throw it with more than

herculean force and precision, you shall be no more able to pierce him than to penetrate the hard shell of a tortoise with a rye straw. Such is man, and so must he be understood by those who would lead him, even to his own best interests.

On this point the Washingtonians greatly excel the temperance advocates of former times. Those whom they desire to convince and persuade are their old friends and companions. They know they are not demons, nor even the worst of men; they know that generally they are kind, generous, and charitable, even beyond the example of their more staid and sober neighbors. They are practical philanthropists; and they glow with a generous and brotherly zeal that mere theorizers are incapable of feeling. Benevolence and charity possess their hearts entirely; and out of the abundance of their hearts their tongues give utterance; "Love through all their actions runs, and all their words are mild." In this spirit they speak and act, and in the same they are heard and regarded. And when such is the temper of the advocate, and such of the audience, no good cause can be unsuccessful. But I have said that denunciations against dram-sellers and dram-drinkers are unjust, as well as impolitic. Let us see. I have not inquired at what period of time the use of intoxicating

liquors commenced; nor is it important to know. It is sufficient that to all of us who now inhabit the world, the practice of drinking them is just as old as the world itself—that is, we have seen the one just as long as we have seen the other. When all such of us as have now reached the years of maturity first opened our eyes upon the stage of existence, we found intoxicating liquor recognized by everybody, used by everybody, repudiated by nobody. It commonly entered into the first draught of the infant and the last draught of the dying man. From the sideboard of the parson down to the ragged pocket of the houseless loafer, it was constantly found. Physicians prescribed it in this, that, and the other disease; government provided it for soldiers and sailors; and to have a rolling or raising, a husking or "hoedown," anywhere about without it was positively insufferable. So, too, it was everywhere a respectable article of manufacture and merchandise. The making of it was regarded as an honorable livelihood, and he who could make most was the most enterprising and respectable. Large and small manufactories of it were everywhere erected, in which all the earthly goods of their owners were invested. Wagons drew it from town to town; boats bore it from clime to clime, and the winds wafted it from nation to nation; and merchants bought

and sold it, by wholesale and retail, with precisely the same feelings on the part of the seller, buyer, and bystander as are felt at the selling and buying of plows, beef, bacon, or any other of the real necessaries of life. Universal public opinion not only tolerated but recognized and adopted its use.

It is true that even then it was known and acknowledged that many were greatly injured by it; but none seemed to think the injury arose from the use of a bad thing, but from the abuse of a very good thing. The victims of it were to be pitied and compassionated, just as are the heirs of consumption and other hereditary diseases. Their failing was treated as a misfortune, and not as a crime, or even as a disgrace. If, then, what I have been saying is true, is it wonderful that some should think and act now as all thought and acted twenty years ago? and is it just to assail, condemn, or despise them for doing so? The universal sense of mankind on any subject is an argument, or at least an influence, not easily overcome. The success of the argument in favor of the existence of an overruling Providence mainly depends upon that sense; and men ought not in justice to be denounced for yielding to it in any case, or giving it up slowly, especially when they are backed by interest, fixed habits, or burning appetites.

Another error, as it seems to me, into which the old reformers fell, was the position that all habitual drunkards were utterly incorrigible, and therefore must be turned adrift and damned without remedy in order that the grace of temperance might abound, to the temperate then, and to all mankind some hundreds of years thereafter. There is in this something so repugnant to humanity, so uncharitable, so cold-blooded and feelingless, that it never did nor ever can enlist the enthusiasm of a popular cause. We could not love the man who taught it—we could not hear him with patience. The heart could not throw open its portals to it, the generous man could not adopt it—it could not mix with his blood. It looked so fiendishly selfish, so like throwing fathers and brothers overboard to lighten the boat for our security, that the noble-minded shrank from the manifest meanness of the thing. And besides this, the benefits of a reformation to be effected by such a system were too remote in point of time to warmly engage many in its behalf. Few can be induced to labor exclusively for posterity; and none will do it enthusiastically. Posterity has done nothing for us; and theorize on it as we may, practically we shall do very little for it, unless we are made to think we are at the same time doing something for ourselves.

What an ignorance of human nature does it exhibit, to ask or expect a whole community to rise up and labor for the temporal happiness of others, after themselves shall be consigned to the dust, a majority of which community take no pains whatever to secure their own eternal welfare at no more distant day? Great distance in either time or space has wonderful power to lull and render quiescent the human mind. Pleasures to be enjoyed, or pains to be endured, after we shall be dead and gone are but little regarded even in our own cases, and much less in the cases of others. Still, in addition to this there is something so ludicrous in promises of good or threats of evil a great way off as to render the whole subject with which they are connected easily turned into ridicule. "Better lay down that spade you are stealing, Paddy; if you don't you'll pay for it at the day of judgment." "Be the powers, if ye'll credit me so long I'll take another jist."

By the Washingtonians this system of consigning the habitual drunkard to hopeless ruin is repudiated. They adopt a more enlarged philanthropy; they go for present as well as future good. They labor for all now living, as well as hereafter to live. They teach hope to all—despair to none. As applying to their cause, they deny the doctrine of unpardonable

sin; as in Christianity it is taught, so in this they teach—"While the lamp holds out to burn, The vilest sinner may return." And, what is a matter of more profound congratulation, they, by experiment upon experiment and example upon example, prove the maxim to be no less true in the one case than in the other. On every hand we behold those who but yesterday were the chief of sinners, now the chief apostles of the cause. Drunken devils are cast out by ones, by sevens, by legions; and their unfortunate victims, like the poor possessed who were redeemed from their long and lonely wanderings in the tombs, are publishing to the ends of the earth how great things have been done for them.

To these new champions and this new system of tactics our late success is mainly owing, and to them we must mainly look for the final consummation. The ball is now rolling gloriously on, and none are so able as they to increase its speed and its bulk, to add to its momentum and its magnitude—even though unlearned in letters, for this task none are so well educated. To fit them for this work they have been taught in the true school.

They have been in that gulf from which they would teach others the means of escape. They have passed that prison wall, which others have long declared impassable; and who that has not

shall dare to weigh opinions with them as to the mode of passing?

But if it be true, as I have insisted, that those who have suffered by intemperance personally, and have reformed, are the most powerful and efficient instruments to push the reformation to ultimate success, it does not follow that those who have not suffered have no part left them to perform. Whether or not the world would be vastly benefited by a total and final banishment from it of all intoxicating drinks seems to me not now an open question. Three fourths of mankind confess the affirmative with their tongues, and, I believe, all the rest acknowledge it in their hearts.

Ought any, then, to refuse their aid in doing what good the good of the whole demands? Shall he who cannot do much be for that reason excused if he do nothing? "But," says one, "what good can I do by signing the pledge? I never drink, even without signing." This question has already been asked and answered more than a million of times. Let it be answered once more. For the man suddenly or in any other way to break off from the use of drams, who has indulged in them for a long course of years, and until his appetite for them has grown ten- or a hundred-fold stronger, and more craving than any natural appetite can be, requires a

most powerful moral effort. In such an undertaking he needs every moral support and influence that can possibly be brought to his aid and thrown around him. And not only so, but every moral prop should be taken from whatever argument might rise in his mind to lure him to his backsliding. When he casts his eyes around him, he should be able to see all that he respects, all that he admires, all that he loves, kindly and anxiously pointing him onward, and none beckoning him back to his former miserable "wallowing in the mire."

But it is said by some that men will think and act for themselves; that none will disuse spirits or anything else because his neighbors do; and that moral influence is not that powerful engine contended for. Let us examine this. Let me ask the man who could maintain this position most stiffly, what compensation he will accept to go to church some Sunday and sit during the sermon with his wife's bonnet upon his head? Not a trifle, I'll venture. And why not? There would be nothing irreligious in it, nothing immoral, nothing uncomfortable—then why not? Is it not because there would be something egregiously unfashionable in it? Then it is the influence of fashion; and what is the influence of fashion but the influence that other people's actions have on our actions—the strong inclina-

tion each of us feels to do as we see all our neighbors do? Nor is the influence of fashion confined to any particular thing or class of things; it is just as strong on one subject as another. Let us make it as unfashionable to withhold our names from the temperance cause as for husbands to wear their wives' bonnets to church, and instances will be just as rare in the one case as the other.

"But," say some, "we are no drunkards, and we shall not acknowledge ourselves such by joining a reformed drunkards' society, whatever our influence might be." Surely no Christian will adhere to this objection. If they believe as they profess, that Omnipotence condescended to take on himself the form of sinful man, and as such to die an ignominious death for their sakes, surely they will not refuse submission to the infinitely lesser condescension, for the temporal, and perhaps eternal, salvation of a large, erring, and unfortunate class of their fellow-creatures. Nor is the condescension very great. In my judgment such of us as have never fallen victims have been spared more by the absence of appetite than from any mental or moral superiority over those who have. Indeed, I believe if we take habitual drunkards as a class, their heads and their hearts will bear an advantageous comparison with those of any other class. There

seems ever to have been a proneness in the brilliant and warm-blooded to fall into this vice—the demon of intemperance ever seems to have delighted in sucking the blood of genius and of generosity. What one of us but can call to mind some relative, more promising in youth than all his fellows, who has fallen a sacrifice to his rapacity? He ever seems to have gone forth like the Egyptian angel of death, commissioned to slay, if not the first, the fairest born of every family. Shall he now be arrested in his desolating career? In that arrest all can give aid that will; and who shall be excused that can and will not? Far around as human breath has ever blown he keeps our fathers, our brothers, our sons, and our friends prostrate in the chains of moral death. To all the living everywhere we cry, "Come sound the moral trump, that these may rise and stand up an exceeding great army." "Come from the four winds, O breath! and breathe upon these slain that they may live." If the relative grandeur of revolutions shall be estimated by the great amount of human misery they alleviate, and the small amount they inflict, then indeed will this be the grandest the world shall ever have seen.

Of our political revolution of '76 we are all justly proud. It has given us a degree of political freedom far exceeding that of any other na-

tion of the earth. In it the world has found a solution of the long-mooted problem as to the capability of man to govern himself. In it was the germ which has vegetated, and still is to grow and expand into the universal liberty of mankind. But, with all these glorious results, past, present, and to come, it had its evils too. It breathed forth famine, swam in blood, and rode in fire; and long, long after, the orphan's cry and the widow's wail continued to break the sad silence that ensued. These were the price, the inevitable price, paid for the blessings it bought.

Turn now to the temperance revolution. In it we shall find a stronger bondage broken, a viler slavery manumitted, a greater tyrant deposed; in it, more of want supplied, more disease healed, more sorrow assuaged. By it no orphans starving, no widows weeping. By it, none wounded in feeling, none injured in interest; even the dram-maker and dram-seller will have glided into other occupations so gradually as never to have felt the change, and will stand ready to join all others in the universal song of gladness. And what a noble ally this to the cause of political freedom; with such an aid its march cannot fail to be on and on, till every son of earth shall drink in rich fruition the sorrow-quenching draughts of perfect lib-

erty. Happy day when—all appetites controlled, all poisons subdued, all matter subjected —mind, all conquering mind, shall live and move, the monarch of the world. Glorious consummation! Hail, fall of fury! Reign of reason, all hail!

And when the victory shall be complete,—when there shall be neither a slave nor a drunkard on the earth,—how proud the title of that land which may truly claim to be the birthplace and the cradle of both those revolutions that shall have ended in that victory. How nobly distinguished that people who shall have planted and nurtured to maturity both the political and moral freedom of their species.

This is the one hundred and tenth anniversary of the birthday of Washington; we are met to celebrate this day. Washington is the mightiest name of earth—long since mightiest in the cause of civil liberty, still mightiest in moral reformation. On that name no eulogy is expected. It cannot be. To add brightness to the sun or glory to the name of Washington is alike impossible. Let none attempt it. In solemn awe pronounce the name, and in its naked deathless splendor leave it shining on.

## Letter to Joshua F. Speed

Springfield, February 25, 1842.

DEAR SPEED: Yours of the 16th instant, announcing that Miss Fanny and you are "no more twain, but one flesh," reached me this morning. I have no way of telling you how much happiness I wish you both, though I believe you both can conceive it. I feel somewhat jealous of both of you now: you will be so exclusively concerned for one another, that I shall be forgotten entirely. My acquaintance with Miss Fanny (I call her this, lest you should think I am speaking of your mother) was too short for me to reasonably hope to long be remembered by her; and still I am sure I shall not forget her soon. Try if you cannot remind her of that debt she owes me—and be sure you do not interfere to prevent her paying it.

I regret to learn that you have resolved to not return to Illinois. I shall be very lonesome without you. How miserably things seem to be arranged in this world! If we have no friends, we have no pleasure; and if we have them, we are sure to lose them, and be doubly

pained by the loss. I did hope she and you would make your home here; but I own I have no right to insist. You owe obligations to her ten thousand times more sacred than you can owe to others, and in that light let them be respected and observed. It is natural that she should desire to remain with her relatives and friends. As to friends, however, she could not need them anywhere: she would have them in abundance here.

Give my kind remembrance to Mr. Williamson and his family, particularly Miss Elizabeth; also to your mother, brother, and sisters. Ask little Eliza Davis if she will ride to town with me if I come there again. And finally, give Fanny a double reciprocation of all the love she sent me. Write me often, and believe me

Yours forever, LINCOLN.

P. S. Poor Easthouse is gone at last. He died awhile before day this morning. They say he was very loath to die. . . . L.

## LETTER TO JOSHUA F. SPEED

SPRINGFIELD, February 25, 1842.

*Dear Speed:* I received yours of the 12th written the day you went down to William's place, some days since, but delayed answering it till I should receive the promised one of the 16th, which came last night. I opened the let-

ter with intense anxiety and trepidation; so much so, that, although it turned out better than I expected, I have hardly yet, at a distance of ten hours, become calm.

I tell you, Speed, our forebodings (for which you and I are peculiar) are all the worst sort of nonsense. I fancied, from the time I received your letter of Saturday, that the one of Wednesday was never to come, and yet it *did* come, and what is more, it is perfectly clear, both from its tone and handwriting, that you were much happier, or, if you think the term preferable, less miserable, when you wrote it than when you wrote the last one before. You had so obviously improved at the very time I so much fancied you would have grown worse. You say that something indescribably horrible and alarming still haunts you. You will not say that three months from now, I will venture. When your nerves once get steady now, the whole trouble will be over forever. Nor should you become impatient at their being even very slow in becoming steady. Again you say, you much fear that that Elysium of which you have dreamed so much is never to be realized. Well, if it shall not, I dare swear it will not be the fault of her who is now your wife. I now have no doubt that it is the peculiar misfortune of both you and me to dream dreams of Elysium far exceeding

all that anything earthly can realize. Far short of your dreams as you may be, no woman could do more to realize them than that same black-eyed Fanny. If you could but contemplate her through my imagination, it would appear ridiculous to you that any one should for a moment think of being unhappy with her. My old father used to have a saying that "If you make a bad bargain, hug it all the tighter"; and it occurs to me that if the bargain you have just closed can possibly be called a bad one, it is certainly the most pleasant one for applying that maxim to which my fancy can by any effort picture.

I write another letter, inclosing this, which you can show her, if she desires it. I do this because she would think strangely, perhaps, should you tell her that you received no letters from me, or, telling her you do, refuse to let her see them. I close this, entertaining the confident hope that every successive letter I shall have from you (which I here pray may not be few, nor far between) may show you possessing a more steady hand and cheerful heart than the last preceding it. As ever, your friend,

LINCOLN

### Letter to Joshua F. Speed

Springfield, March 27, 1842.

*Dear Speed:* Yours of the 10th instant was received three or four days since. You know I am sincere when I tell you the pleasure its contents gave me was, and is, inexpressible. As to your farm matter, I have no sympathy with you. I have no farm, nor ever expect to have, and consequently have not studied the subject enough to be much interested in it. I can only say that I am glad you are satisfied and pleased with it. But on that other subject, to me of the most intense interest whether in joy or in sorrow, I never had the power to withhold my sympathy from you. It cannot be told how it now thrills me with joy to hear you say you are "far happier than you ever expected to be." That much I know is enough. I know you too well to suppose your expectations were not, at least, sometimes extravagant, and if the reality exceeds them all, I say, Enough, dear Lord. I am not going beyond the truth when I tell you that the short space it took me to read your last letter gave me more pleasure than the total sum of all I have enjoyed since the fatal 1st of January, 1841. Since then it seems to me I should have been entirely happy, but for the never-absent idea that there is one still unhappy whom I have

contributed to make so. That still kills my soul. I cannot but reproach myself for even wishing to be happy while she is otherwise. She accompanied a large party on the railroad cars to Jacksonville last Monday, and on her return spoke, so that I heard of it, of having enjoyed the trip exceedingly. God be praised for that.

You know with what sleepless vigilance I have watched you ever since the commencement of your affair; and although I am almost confident it is useless, I cannot forbear once more to say that I think it is even yet possible for your spirits to flag down and leave you miserable. If they should, don't fail to remember that they cannot long remain so. One thing I can tell you which I know you will be glad to hear, and that is that I have seen —— and scrutinized her feelings as well as I could, and am fully convinced she is far happier now than she has been for the last fifteen months past.

You will see by the last "Sangamon Journal" that I made a temperance speech on the 22d of February, which I claim that Fanny and you shall read as an act of charity to me; for I cannot learn that anybody else has read it, or is likely to. Fortunately it is not very long, and I shall deem it a sufficient compliance with my request if one of you listens while the other reads it.

As to your Lockridge matter, it is only necessary to say that there has been no court since you left, and that the next commences to-morrow morning, during which I suppose we cannot fail to get a judgment.

I wish you would learn of Everett what he would take, over and above a discharge for all the trouble we have been at, to take his business out of our hands and give it to somebody else. It is impossible to collect money on that or any other claim here now; and although you know I am not a very petulant man, I declare I am almost out of patience with Mr. Everett's importunity. It seems like he not only writes all the letters he can himself, but gets everybody else in Louisville and vicinity to be constantly writing to us about his claim. I have always said that Mr. Everett is a very clever fellow, and I am very sorry he cannot be obliged; but it does seem to me he ought to know we are interested to collect his claim, and therefore would do it if we could.

I am neither joking nor in a pet when I say we would thank him to transfer his business to some other, without any compensation for what we have done, provided he will see the court cost paid, for which we are security.

The sweet violet you inclosed came safely to hand, but it was so dry, and mashed so flat, that

it crumbled to dust at the first attempt to handle it. The juice that mashed out of it stained a place in the letter, which I mean to preserve and cherish for the sake of her who procured it to be sent. My renewed good wishes to her in particular, and generally to all such of your relations who know me.

As ever, LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO JOSHUA F. SPEED

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, July 4, 1842.

*Dear Speed:* Yours of the 16th June was received only a day or two since. It was not mailed at Louisville till the 25th. You speak of the great time that has elapsed since I wrote you. Let me explain that. Your letter reached here a day or two after I had started on the circuit. I was gone five or six weeks, so that I got the letters only a few weeks before Butler started to your country. I thought it scarcely worth while to write you the news which he could and would tell you more in detail. On his return he told me you would write me soon, and so I waited for your letter. As to my having been displeased with your advice, surely you know better than that. I know you do, and therefore will not labor to convince you. True, that subject is painful to me; but it is not your silence, or the silence of all the world, that can make me

forget it. I acknowledge the correctness of your advice too; but before I resolve to do the one thing or the other, I must gain my confidence in my own ability to keep my resolves when they are made. In that ability you know I once prided myself as the only or chief gem of my character; that gem I lost—how and where you know too well. I have not yet regained it; and until I do, I cannot trust myself in any matter of much importance. I believe now that had you understood my case at the time as well as I understood yours afterward, by the aid you would have given me I should have sailed through clear, but that does not now afford me sufficient confidence to begin that or the like of that again.

You make a kind acknowledgment of your obligations to me for your present happiness. I am pleased with that acknowledgment. But a thousand times more am I pleased to know that you enjoy a degree of happiness worthy of an acknowledgment. The truth is, I am not sure that there was any merit with me in the part I took in your difficulty; I was drawn to it by a fate. If I would I could not have done less than I did. I was always superstitious; I believe God made me one of the instruments of bringing your Fanny and you together, which union I have no doubt he had foreordained.

Whatever he designs he will do for me yet. "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord" is my text just now. If, as you say, you have told Fanny all, I should have no objection to her seeing this letter, but for its reference to our friend here: let her seeing it depend upon whether she has ever known anything of my affairs; and if she has not, do not let her.

I do not think I can come to Kentucky this season. I am so poor and make so little headway in the world, that I drop back in a month of idleness as much as I gain in a year's sowing. I should like to visit you again. I should like to see that "sis" of yours that was absent when I was there, though I suppose she would run away again if she were to hear I was coming.

. . . . . .

My respects and esteem to all your friends there, and, by your permission, my love to your Fanny. Ever yours,

A. LINCOLN.

## *LETTER TO MR. WALKER

SPRINGFIELD, August 15, 1842.

*Friend Walker:* Enclosed you have an order of court allowing your assignee to sell your property on a credit. Nothing is said in it about allowing your creditors pay for what they

may purchase without money. We however, think this a matter of no consequence; as it will be a matter of course to take their *bonds* and security, as of other purchasers, and then, in the final settlement, to set off their dividends against those bonds in whole or as far as they will go.

Yours, &c.,

LOGAN & LINCOLN.

## *A Letter from the "Lost Townships"

Lost Townships, August 27, 1842.

DEAR MR. PRINTER: I see you printed that long letter I sent you a spell ago. I'm quite encouraged by it, and can't keep from writing again. I think the printing of my letters will be a good thing all round—it will give me the benefit of being known by the world, and give the world the advantage of knowing what's going on in the Lost Townships, and give your paper respectability besides. So here comes another. Yes-

[1] This lampoon-letter of Lincoln's was shortly followed by another of the same sort written by Miss Mary Todd and her friend, Miss Julia M. Jayne. The three merry conspirators sent their effusions to the Springfield "Journal." Their target was a Democrat, James Shields, a "gallant, hot-headed bachelor from Tyrone," then Auditor of the State of Illinois. The attack was particularly effective, as the financial resources of the State had become limited and the State officers had issued an edict refusing to receive any more State banknotes. Shields in great dudgeon demanded the name of the writer of the offensive articles. Lincoln claimed authorship and Shields promptly challenged him to a duel. Lincoln had choice of weapons and chose broad swords. The encounter never actually took place, due to the great difference in the size of the opponents and the absurdity of the whole situation. This farcical duel was used against Lincoln politically. On the other hand, it brought Miss Todd and him together again and their marriage followed shortly after.

terday afternoon I hurried through cleaning up the dinner dishes and stepped over to Neighbor S—— to see if his wife Peggy was as well as mout be expected, and hear what they called the baby. Well, when I got there and just turned round the corner of his log cabin, there he was, setting on the doorstep reading a newspaper. "How are you, Jeff?" says I. He sorter started when he heard me, for he hadn't seen me before. "Why," says he, "I'm mad as the devil, Aunt 'Becca!" "What about," says I; "ain't its hair the right color? None of that nonsense, Jeff; there ain't an honester woman in the Lost Townships than" —— "Than who?" says he; "what the mischief are you about?" I began to see I was running the wrong trail, and so says I, "Oh! nothing: I guess I was mistaken a little, that's all. But what is it you're mad about?"

"Why," says he, "I've been tugging ever since harvest, getting out wheat and hauling it to the river to raise State Bank paper enough to pay my tax this year and a little school debt I owe; and now, just as I've got it, here I open this infernal Extra Register, expecting to find it full of 'Glorious Democratic Victories' and 'High Comb'd Cocks,' when, lo and behold! I find a set of fellows, calling themselves officers of the State, have forbidden the tax collectors and school

commissioners to receive State paper at all; and so here it is dead on my hands. I don't now believe all the plunder I've got will fetch ready cash enough to pay my taxes and that school debt."

I was a good deal thunderstruck myself; for that was the first I had heard of the proclamation, and my old man was pretty much in the same fix with Jeff. We both stood a moment staring at one another without knowing what to say. At last says I, "Mr. S——, let me look at that paper." He handed it to me, when I read the proclamation over.

"There now," says he, "did you ever see such a piece of impudence and imposition as that?" I saw Jeff was in a good tune for saying some ill-natured things, and so I tho't I would just argue a little on the contrary side, and make him rant a spell if I could. "Why," says I, looking as dignified and thoughtful as I could, "it seems pretty tough, to be sure, to have to raise silver where there's none to be raised; but then, you see, 'there will be danger of loss' if it ain't done." "Loss! damnation!" says he "I defy Daniel Webster, I defy King Solomon, I defy the world—I defy—I defy—yes, I defy even you, Aunt 'Becca, to show how the people can lose anything by paying their taxes in State paper."

"Well," says I, "you see what the officers of

State say about it, and they are a desarnin' set of men. But," says I, "I guess you're mistaken about what the proclamation says. It don't say the people will lose anything by the paper money being taken for taxes. It only says 'there will be danger of loss'; and though it is tolerable plain that the people can't lose by paying their taxes in something they can get easier than silver, instead of having to pay silver; and though it's just as plain that the State can't lose by taking State Bank paper, however low it may be, while she owes the bank more than the whole revenue, and can pay that paper over on her debt, dollar for dollar;—still there is danger of loss to the 'officers of State'; and you know, Jeff, we can't get along without officers of State."

"Damn officers of State!" says he. Says I, "You know I belong to the meetin', and swearin' hurts my feelings."

"Beg pardon, Aunt 'Becca," says he; "but I do say it's enough to make Dr. Goddard swear, to have tax to pay in silver, for nothing only that Ford may get his two thousand a year, and Shields his twenty-four hundred a year, and Carpenter his sixteen hundred a year, and all without 'danger of loss' by taking it in State paper. Yes, yes; it's plain enough now what these officers of State mean by 'danger of loss.' Wash,

I s'pose, actually lost fifteen hundred dollars out of the three thousand that two of these 'officers of State' let him steal from the treasury, by being compelled to take it in State paper. Wonder if we don't have a proclamation before long, commanding us to make up this loss to Wash in silver."

And so he went on till his breath run out, and he had to stop. I couldn't think of anything to say just then, and so I begun to look over the paper again. "Ay! here's another proclamation, or something like it."

"Another?" says Jeff; "and whose egg is it, pray?" I looked to the bottom of it, and read aloud, "Your obedient servant, James Shields, Auditor."

"Aha!" says Jeff, "one of them same three fellows again. Well, read it, and let's hear what of it."

I read on till I came to where it says, 'The object of this measure is to suspend the collection of the revenue for the current year.'

"Now stop, now stop!" says he; "that's a lie a'ready, and I don't want to hear of it."

"Oh! may be not," says I.

I say it is—a—lie. Suspend the collection, indeed! Will the collectors, that have taken their oaths to make the collection, dare to suspend it? Is there anything in law requiring

them to perjure themselves at the bidding of James Shields?

"Will the greedy gullet of the penitentiary be satisfied with swallowing him instead of all of them, if they should venture to obey him? And would he not discover some 'danger of loss,' and be off about the time it came to taking their places?

"And suppose the people attempt to suspend, by refusing to pay; what then? The collectors would just jerk up their horses and cows, and the like, and sell them to the highest bidder for silver in hand, without valuation or redemption. Why, Shields didn't believe that story himself—it was never meant for the truth. If it was true, why was it not writ till five days after the proclamation? Why didn't Carlin and Carpenter sign it as well as Shields? Answer me that, Aunt 'Becca. I say it's a lie, and not a well told one at that. It grins out like a copper dollar. Shields is a fool as well as a liar. With him truth is out of the question; and as for getting a good, bright, passable lie out of him, you might as well try to strike fire from a cake of tallow. I stick to it, it's all an infernal Whig lie!"

"A Whig lie! Highty tighty!"

"Yes, a Whig lie; and it's just like everything the cursed British Whigs do. First they'll do

some devilment, and then they'll tell a lie to hide it. And they don't care how plain a lie it is: they think they can cram any sort of a one down the throats of the ignorant Locofocos, as they call the Democrats."

"Why, Jeff, you're crazy; you don't mean to say Shields is a Whig!"

"Yes, I do."

"Why, look here! the proclamation is in your own Democratic paper, as you call it."

"I know it; and what of that? They only printed it to let us Democrats see the deviltry the Whigs are at."

"Well, but Shields is the Auditor of this Loco—— I mean this Democratic State."

"So he is, and Tyler appointed him to office."

"Tyler appointed him?"

"Yes (if you must chaw it over), Tyler appointed him; or, if it wasn't him, it was old Granny Harrison, and that's all one. I tell you, Aunt 'Becca, there's no mistake about his being a Whig. Why, his very looks shows it; everything about him shows it: if I was deaf and blind, I could tell him by the smell. I seed him when I was down in Springfield last winter. They had a sort of a gatherin' there one night among the grandees, they called a fair. All the gals about town was there, and all the handsome widows and married women, finickin' about try-

ing to look like gals, tied as tight in the middle, and puffed out at both ends, like bundles of fodder that hadn't been stacked yet, but wanted stackin' pretty bad. And then they had tables all around the house kivered over with [ ] caps and pincushions and ten thousand such little knic-knacks, tryin' to sell 'em to the fellows that were bowin' and scrapin' and kungeerin' about 'em. They wouldn't let no Democrats in, for fear they'd disgust the ladies, or scare the little gals, or dirty the floor. I looked in at the window, and there was the same fellow Shields floatin' about on the air, without heft or earthly substances, just like a lot of cat fur where cats had been fighting.

"He was paying his money to this one, and that one, and t'other one, and sufferin' great loss because it wasn't silver instead of State paper; and the sweet distress he seemed to be in,—his very features, in the ecstatic agony of his soul, spoke audibly and distinctly, 'Dear girls, it is distressing, but I cannot marry you all. Too well I know how much you suffer; but do, do remember, it is not my fault that I am so handsome and so interesting.'

"As this last was expressed by a most exquisite contortion of his face, he seized hold of one of their hands, and squeezed, and held on to it about a quarter of an hour. 'Oh, my good fel-

low!' says I to myself, 'if that was one of our Democratic gals in the Lost Townships, the way you'd get a brass pin let into you would be about up to the head.' He a Democrat! Fiddlesticks! I tell you, Aunt 'Becca, he's a Whig, and no mistake: nobody but a Whig could make such a conceity dunce of himself."

"Well," says I, "maybe he is; but, if he is, I'm mistaken the worst sort. Maybe so, maybe so; but, if I am, I'll suffer by it; I'll be a Democrat if it turns out that Shields is a Whig, considerin' you shall be a Whig if he turns out a Democrat."

"A bargain, by jingoes!" says he; "but how will we find out?"

"Why," says I, "we'll just write and ax the printer."

"Agreed again!" says he; "and by thunder! if it does turn out that Shields is a Democrat, I never will"——

"Jefferson! Jefferson!"

"What do you want, Peggy?"

"Do get through your everlasting clatter some time, and bring me a gourd of water; the child's been crying for a drink this livelong hour."

"Let it die, then; it may as well die for water as to be taxed to death to fatten officers of State."

Jeff run off to get the water, though, just like he hadn't been saying spiteful, for he's a raal

good-hearted fellow, after all, once you get at the foundation of him.

I walked into the house, and, "Why, Peggy," says I, "I declare we like to forgot you altogether."

"Oh, yes," says she, "when a body can't help themselves, everybody soon forgets 'em; but, thank God! by day after to-morrow I shall be well enough to milk the cows, and pen the calves, and wring the contrary ones' tails for 'em, and no thanks to nobody."

"Good evening, Peggy," says I, and so I sloped, for I seed she was mad at me for making Jeff neglect her so long.

And now, Mr. Printer, will you be sure to let us know in your next paper whether this Shields is a Whig or a Democrat? I don't care about it for myself, for I know well enough how it is already; but I want to convince Jeff. It may do some good to let him, and others like him, know who and what these officers of State are. It may help to send the present hypocritical set to where they belong, and to fill the places they now disgrace, with men who will do more work for less pay, and take a fewer airs while they are doing it. It ain't sensible to think that the same men who get us into trouble will change their course; and yet it's pretty plain if some change for the better is not made, it's not long that either

Peggy or I or any of us will have a cow left to milk, or a calf's tail to wring.

Yours truly,
REBECCA ———.

## INVITATION TO HENRY CLAY

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, August 29, 1842.

HON. HENRY CLAY, Lexington, Kentucky.

*Dear Sir:* We hear you are to visit Indianapolis, Indiana, on the 5th of October next. If our information in this is correct, we hope you will not deny us the pleasure of seeing you in our State. We are aware of the toil necessarily incident to a journey by one circumstanced as you are; but once you have embarked, as you have already determined to do, the toil would not be greatly augmented by extending the journey to our capital. The season of the year will be most favorable for good roads and pleasant weather; and although we cannot but believe you would be highly gratified with such a visit to the prairie-land, the pleasure it would give us, and thousands such as we, is beyond all question. You have never visited Illinois, or at least this portion of it; and should you now yield to our request, we promise you such a reception as shall be worthy of the man on whom are now turned the fondest hopes of a great and suffering nation.

Please inform us at the earliest convenience

whether we may expect you. Very respectfully, your obedient servants,

A. G. HENRY, A. T. BLEDSOE,
C. BIRCHALL, A. LINCOLN,
J. M. CABANISS, ROBT. IRWIN,
P. A. SAUNDERS, J. M. ALLEN,
J. N. FRANCIS,

*Executive Committee, "Clay Club."*

(Clay's answer, September 6, 1842, declines with thanks.—N. and H.)

## CORRESPONDENCE ABOUT THE LINCOLN-SHIELDS DUEL

TREMONT, September 17, 1842.

*A. Lincoln, Esq.:* I regret that my absence on public business compelled me to postpone a matter of private consideration a little longer than I could have desired. It will only be necessary, however, to account for it by informing you that I have been to Quincy on business that would not admit of delay. I will now state briefly the reasons of my troubling you with this communication, the disagreeable nature of which I regret, as I had hoped to avoid any difficulty with any one in Springfield while residing there, by endeavoring to conduct myself in such a way amongst both my political friends and opponents as to escape the necessity of any. Whilst thus abstaining from giving provocation,

I have become the object of slander, vituperation, and personal abuse, which, were I capable of submitting to, I would prove myself worthy of the whole of it.

In two or three of the last numbers of "The Sangamon Journal," articles of the most personal nature and calculated to degrade me have made their appearance. On inquiring, I was informed by the editor of that paper, through the medium of my friend General Whitesides, that you are the author of those articles. This information satisfies me that I have become by some means or other the object of your secret hostility. I will not take the trouble of inquiring into the reason of all this; but I will take the liberty of requiring a full, positive, and absolute retraction of all offensive allusions used by you in these communications, in relation to my private character and standing as a man, as an apology for the insults conveyed in them.

This may prevent consequences which no one will regret more than myself.

Your obedient servant,

JAS. SHIELDS.

TREMONT, September 17, 1842.

*Jas. Shields, Esq.:* Your note of to-day was handed me by General Whitesides. In that note you say you have been informed, through the

medium of the editor of "The Journal," that I am the author of certain articles in that paper which you deem personally abusive of you; and without stopping to inquire whether I really am the author, or to point out what is offensive in them, you demand an unqualified retraction of all that is offensive, and then proceed to hint at consequences.

Now, sir, there is in this so much assumption of facts and so much of menace as to consequences, that I cannot submit to answer that note any further than I have, and to add that the consequences to which I suppose you allude would be matter of as great regret to me as it possibly could to you. Respectfully,

A. LINCOLN.

TREMONT, September 17, 1842.

*A. Lincoln, Esq.:* In reply to my note of this date, you intimate that I assume facts and menace consequences, and that you cannot submit to answer it further. As now, sir, you desire it, I will be a little more particular. The editor of "The Sangamon Journal" gave me to understand that you are the author of an article which appeared, I think, in that paper of the 2d September instant, headed "The Lost Townships," and signed Rebecca or 'Becca. I would therefore take the liberty of asking whether you

are the author of said article, or any other over the same signature which has appeared in any of the late numbers of that paper. If so, I repeat my request of an absolute retraction of all offensive allusion contained therein in relation to my private character and standing. If you are not the author of any of these articles, your denial will be sufficient. I will say further, it is not my intention to menace, but to do myself justice. Your obedient servant,

JAS. SHIELDS.

## Memorandum of Instructions to E. H. Merryman, Lincoln's Second, September 19, 1842

IN CASE Whitesides shall signify a wish to adjust this affair without further difficulty, let him know that if the present papers be withdrawn, and a note from Mr. Shields asking to know if I am the author of the articles of which he complains, and asking that I shall make him gentlemanly satisfaction if I am the author, and this without menace or dictation as to what that satisfaction shall be, a pledge is made that the following answer shall be given:

"I did write the 'Lost Townships' letter which appeared in the 'Journal' of the 2d instant, but had no participation in any form in any other article alluding to you. I wrote that wholly for political effect—I had no intention of injuring your personal or private character or standing as a man or a gentleman; and I did not then think, and do not now think, that that article could produce or has produced that effect against you.; and had I anticipated such an effect I would have foreborne to write it. And

I will add that your conduct toward me, so far as I know, had always been gentlemanly; and that I had no personal pique against you, and no cause for any."

If this should be done, I leave it with you to arrange what shall and what shall not be published. If nothing like this is done, the preliminaries of the fight are to be—

*First.* Weapons: Cavalry broadswords of the largest size, precisely equal in all respects, and such as now used by the cavalry company at Jacksonville.

*Second.* Position: A plank ten feet long, and from nine to twelve inches broad, to be firmly fixed on edge, on the ground, as the line between us, which neither is to pass his foot over upon forfeit of his life. Next a line drawn on the ground on either side of said plank and parallel with it, each at the distance of the whole length of the sword and three feet additional from the plank; and the passing of his own such line by either party during the fight shall be deemed a surrender of the contest.

*Third.* Time: On Thursday evening at five o'clock, if you can get it so; but in no case to be at a greater distance of time than Friday evening at five o'clock.

*Fourth.* Place. Within three miles of Alton,

on the opposite side of the river, the particular spot to be agreed on by you.

Any preliminary details coming within the above rules you are at liberty to make at your discretion; but you are in no case to swerve from these rules, or to pass beyond their limits.

## Letter to Joshua F. Speed

Springfield, October [4?], 1842.

*Dear Speed:* You have heard of my duel with Shields, and I have now to inform you that the dueling business still rages in this city. Day before yesterday Shields challenged Butler, who accepted, and proposed fighting next morning at sunrise in Bob Allen's meadow, one hundred yards' distance, with rifles. To this Whitesides, Shield's second, said "No," because of the law. Thus ended duel No. 2. Yesterday Whitesides chose to consider himself insulted by Dr. Merryman, so sent him a kind of quasi-challenge, inviting him to meet him at the Planter's House in St. Louis on the next Friday, to settle their difficulty. Merryman made me his friend, and sent Whitesides a note, inquiring to know if he meant his note as a challenge, and if so, that he would, according to the law in such case made and provided, prescribe the terms of the meeting. Whitesides returned for answer that if

Merryman would meet him at the Planter's House as desired, he would challenge him. Merryman replied in a note that he denied Whiteside's right to dictate time and place, but that he (Merryman) would waive the question of time, and meet him at Louisiana, Missouri. Upon my presenting this note to Whitesides and stating verbally its contents, he declined receiving it, saying he had business in St. Louis, and it was as near as Louisiana. Merryman then directed me to notify Whitesides that he should publish the correspondence between them, with such comments as he thought fit. This I did. Thus it stood at bedtime last night. This morning Whitesides, by his friend Shields, is praying for a new trial, on the ground that he was mistaken in Merryman's proposition to meet him at Louisiana, Missouri, thinking it was the State of Louisiana. This Merryman hoots at, and is preparing his publication; while the town is in a ferment, and a street fight somewhat anticipated.

But I began this letter not for what I have been writing, but to say something on that subject which you know to be of such infinite solicitude to me. The immense sufferings you endured from the first days of September till the middle of February you never tried to conceal from me, and I well understood. You have now

been the husband of a lovely woman nearly eight months. That you are happier now than the day you married her I well know, for without you could not be living. But I have your word for it, too, and the returning elasticity of spirits which is manifested in your letters. But I want to ask a close question, "Are you now in feeling as well as judgment glad that you are married as you are?" From anybody but me this would be an impudent question, not to be tolerated; but I know you will pardon it in me. Please answer it quickly, as I am impatient to know. I have sent my love to your Fanny so often, I fear she is getting tired of it. However, I venture to tender it again.

Yours forever,
LINCOLN.

## RESOLUTIONS AT A WHIG MEETING AT SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, March 1, 1843

The object of the meeting was stated by Mr. Lincoln of Springfield, who offered the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

*Resolved,* That a tariff of duties on imported goods, producing sufficient revenue for the payment of the necessary expenditures of the National Government, and so adjusted as to protect American in-

dustry, is indispensably necessary to the prosperity of the American people.

*Resolved,* That we are opposed to direct taxation for the support of the National Government.

*Resolved,* That a national bank, properly restricted, is highly necessary and proper to the establishment and maintenance of a sound currency, and for the cheap and safe collection, keeping, and disbursing of the public revenue.

*Resolved,* That the distribution of the proceeds of the sales of public lands, upon the principles of Mr. Clay's bill, accords with the best interests of the nation, and particularly with those of the State of Illinois.

*Resolved,* That we recommend to the Whigs of each congressional district of the State, to nominate and support the approaching election a candidate of their own principles, regardless of the chances of success.

*Resolved,* That we recommend to the Whigs of all portions of the State to adopt and rigidly adhere to the convention system of nominating candidates.

*Resolved,* That we recommend to the Whigs of each congressional district to hold a district convention on or before the first Monday of May next, to be composed of a number of delegates from each county equal to double the number of its representatives in the General Assembly, *provided,* each county shall have at least one delegate. Said delegates to be chosen by primary meetings of the Whigs, at such times and places as they in their respective counties

may see fit. Said district conventions each to nominate one candidate for Congress, and one delegate to a National Convention for the purpose of nominating candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States. The seven delegates so nominated to a national convention to have power to add two delegates to their own number, and to fill all vacancies.

*Resolved,* That A. T. Bledsoe, S. T. Logan, and A. Lincoln be appointed a committee to prepare an address to the people of the State.

*Resolved,* That N. W. Edwards, A. G. Henry, James H. Matheny, John C. Doremus, and James C. Conkling be appointed a Whig Central State Committee, with authority to fill any vacancy that may occur in the committee.



Sarah Bush Lincoln

*From an Original Photograph taken when Mrs. Lincoln was seventy-six years of age.*

## Circular from Whig Committee, March 4, 1843

*Address to the People of Illinois.*

FELLOW-CITIZENS: By a resolution of a meeting of such of the Whigs of the State as are now at Springfield, we, the undersigned, were appointed to prepare an address to you. The performance of that task we now undertake.

Several resolutions were adopted by the meeting; and the chief object of this address is to show briefly the reasons for their adoption.

The first of those resolutions declares a tariff of duties upon foreign importations, producing sufficient revenue for the support of the General Government, and so adjusted as to protect American industry, to be indispensably necessary to the prosperity of the American people; and the second declares direct taxation for a national revenue to be improper. Those two resolutions are kindred in their nature, and therefore proper and convenient to be considered together. The question of protection is a subject entirely too broad to be crowded into a few pages only, to-

gether with several other subjects. On that point we therefore content ourselves with giving the following extracts from the writings of Mr. Jefferson, General Jackson, and the speech of Mr. Calhoun:

To be independent for the comforts of life, we must fabricate them ourselves. We must now place the manufacturer by the side of the agriculturalist. The grand inquiry now is, Shall we make our own comforts, or go without them at the will of a foreign nation? He, therefore, who is now against domestic manufactures must be for reducing us either to dependence on that foreign nation, or to be clothed in skins and to live like wild beasts in dens and caverns. I am not one of those; experience has taught me that manufactures are now as necessary to our independence as to our comfort.—*Letter of Mr. Jefferson to Benjamin Austin.*

I ask, What is the real situation of the agriculturalist? Where has the American farmer a market for his surplus produce? Except for cotton, he has neither a foreign nor a home market. Does not this clearly prove, when there is no market at home or abroad, that there [is] too much labor employed in agriculture? Common sense at once points out the remedy. Take from agriculture six hundred thousand men, women, and children, and you will at once give a market for more breadstuffs than all Europe now furnishes. In short, we have been too long subject to the policy of British merchants. It is time

we should become a little more Americanized, and instead of feeding the paupers and laborers of England, feed our own; or else in a short time, by continuing our present policy, we shall all be rendered paupers ourselves.—*General Jackson's Letter to Dr. Coleman.*

When our manufactures are grown to a certain perfection, as they soon will be, under the fostering care of government, the farmer will find a ready market for his surplus produce, and—what is of equal consequence—a certain and cheap supply of all he wants; his prosperity will diffuse itself to every class of the community.—*Speech of Hon. J. C. Calhoun on the Tariff.*

The question of revenue we will now briefly consider. For several years past the revenues of the government have been unequal to its expenditures, and consequently loan after loan, sometimes direct and sometimes indirect in form, has been resorted to. By this means a new national debt has been created, and is still growing on us with a rapidity fearful to contemplate—a rapidity only reasonably to be expected in time of war. This state of things has been produced by a prevailing unwillingness either to increase the tariff or resort to direct taxation. But the one or the other must come. Coming expeditures must be met, and the present debt must be paid; and money cannot always be borrowed for

these objects. The system of loans is but temporary in its nature, and must soon explode. It is a system not only ruinous while it lasts, but one that must soon fail and leave us destitute. As an individual who undertakes to live by borrowing soon finds his original means devoured by interest, and, next, no one left to borrow from, so must it be with a government.

We repeat, then, that a tariff sufficient for revenue, or a direct tax, must soon be resorted to; and, indeed, we believe this alternative is now denied by no one. But which system shall be adopted? Some of our opponents, in theory, admit the propriety of a tariff sufficient for a revenue; but even they will not in practice vote for such a tariff; while others boldly advocate direct taxation. Inasmuch, therefore, as some of them boldly advocate direct taxation, and all the rest—or so nearly all as to make exceptions needless—refuse to adopt the tariff, we think it is doing them no injustice to class them all as advocates of direct taxation. Indeed, we believe they are only delaying an open avowal of the system till they can assure themselves that the people will tolerate it. Let us, then, briefly compare the two systems. The tariff is the cheaper system, because the duties, being collected in large parcels at a few commercial points, will require comparatively few officers

in their collection; while by the direct-tax system the land must be literally covered with assessors and collectors, going forth like swarms of Egyptian locusts, devouring every blade of grass and other green thing. And, again, by the tariff system the whole revenue is paid by the consumers of foreign goods, and those chiefly the luxuries, and not the necessaries, of life. By this system the man who contents himself to live upon the products of his own country pays nothing at all. And surely that country is extensive enough, and its products abundant and varied enough, to answer all the real wants of its people. In short, by this system the burthen of revenue falls almost entirely on the wealthy and luxurious few, while the substantial and laboring many who live at home, and upon home products, go entirely free. By the direct tax system none can escape. However strictly the citizen may exclude from his premises all foreign luxuries,—fine cloths, fine silks, rich wines, golden chains, and diamond rings,—still, for the possession of his house, his barn, and his homespun, he is to be perpetually haunted and harassed by the tax-gatherer. With these views we leave it to be determined whether we or our opponents are the more truly democratic on the subject.

The third resolution declares the necessity and propriety of a national bank. During the last

fifty years so much has been said and written both as to the constitutionality and expediency of such an institution, that we could not hope to improve in the least on former discussions of the subject, were we to undertake it. We, therefore, upon the question of constitutionality content ourselves with remarking the facts that the first national bank was established chiefly by the same men who formed the Constitution, at a time when that instrument was but two years old, and receiving the sanction, as president, of the immortal Washington; that the second received the sanction, as president, of Mr. Madison, to whom common consent has awarded the proud title of "Father of the Constitution"; and subsequently the sanction of the Supreme Court, the most enlightened judicial tribunal in the world. Upon the question of expediency, we only ask you to examine the history of the times during the existence of the two banks, and compare those times with the miserable present.

The fourth resolution declares the expediency of Mr. Clay's Land Bill. Much incomprehensible jargon is often used against the constitutionality of this measure. We forbear, in this place, attempting an answer to it, simply because, in our opinion, those who urge it are through party zeal resolved not to see or acknowledge the truth. The question of expe-

diency, at least so far as Illinois is concerned, seems to us the clearest imaginable. By the bill we are to receive annually a large sum of money, no part of which we otherwise receive. The precise annual sum cannot be known in advance; it doubtless will vary in different years. Still it is something to know that in the last year—a year of almost unparalleled pecuniary pressure—it amounted to more than forty thousand dollars. This annual income, in the midst of our almost insupportable difficulties, in the days of our severest necessity, our political opponents are furiously resolving to take and keep from us. And for what? Many silly reasons are given, as is usual in cases where a single good one is not to be found. One is that by giving us the proceeds of the lands, we impoverish the national treasury, and thereby render necessary an increase of the tariff. This may be true; but if so, the amount of it only is that those whose pride, whose abundance of means, prompt them to spurn the manufactures of our country, and to strut in British cloaks and coats and pantaloons, may have to pay a few cents more on the yard for the cloth that makes them. A terrible evil, truly, to the Illinois farmer, who never wore, nor ever expects to wear, a single yard of British goods in his whole life. Another of their reasons is that by the passage and continu-

ance of Mr. Clay's bill, we prevent the passage of a bill which would give us more. This, if it were sound in itself, is waging destructive war with the former position; for if Mr. Clay's bill impoverishes the treasury too much, what shall be said of one that impoverishes it still more? But it is not sound in itself. It is not true that Mr. Clay's bill prevents the passage of one more favorable to us of the new States. Considering the strength and opposite interest of the old States, the wonder is that they ever permitted one to pass so favorable as Mr. Clay's. The last twenty-odd years' efforts to reduce the price of the lands, and to pass graduation bills and cession bills, prove the assertion to be true; and if there were no experience in support of it, the reason itself is plain. The States in which none, or few, of the public lands lie, and those consequently interested against parting with them except for the best price, are the majority; and a moment's reflection will show that they must ever continue the majority, because by the time one of the original new States (Ohio, for example) becomes populous and gets weight in Congress, the public lands in her limits are so nearly sold out that in every point material to this question she becomes an old State. She does not wish the price reduced, because there is none left for her citizens to buy; she does not wish them ceded to the

States in which they lie, because they no longer lie in her limits, and she will get nothing by the cession. In the nature of things, the States interested in the reduction of price, in graduation, in cession, and in all similar projects, never can be the majority. Nor is there reason to hope that any of them can ever succeed as a Democratic party measure, because we have heretofore seen that party in full power, year after year, with many of their leaders making loud professions in favor of these projects, and yet doing nothing. What reason, then, is there to believe they will hereafter do better? In every light in which we can view this question, it amounts simply to this: Shall we accept our share of the proceeds under Mr. Clay's bill, or shall we rather reject that and get nothing?

The fifth resolution recommends that a Whig candidate for Congress be run in every district, regardless of the chances of success. We are aware that it is sometimes a temporary gratification, when a friend cannot succeed, to be able to choose between opponents; but we believe that that gratification is the seed-time which never fails to be followed by a most abundant harvest of bitterness. By this policy we entangle ourselves. By voting for our opponents, such of us as do it in some measure estop ourselves to complain of their acts, however glaringly wrong we

may believe them to be. By this policy no one portion of our friends can ever be certain as to what course another portion may adopt; and by this want of mutual and perfect understanding our political identity is partially frittered away and lost. And, again, those who are thus elected by our aid ever become our bitterest persecutors. Take a few prominent examples. In 1830 Reynolds was so elected governor; in 1835 we exerted our whole strength to elect Judge Young to the United States Senate, which effort, though failing, gave him the prominence that subsequently elected him; in 1836 General Ewing was so elected to the United States Senate; and yet let us ask what three men have been more perseveringly vindictive in their assaults upon all our men and measures than they? During the last summer the whole State was covered with pamphlet editions of misrepresentations against us, methodized into chapters and verses, written by two of these same men,—Reynolds and Young,—in which they did not stop at charging us with error merely, but roundly denounced us as the designing enemies of human liberty itself. If it be the will of Heaven that such men shall politically live, be it so; but never, never again permit them to draw a particle of their sustenance from us.

The sixth resolution recommends the adoption

of the convention system for the nomination of candidates. This we believe to be of the very first importance. Whether the system is right in itself we do not stop to inquire; contenting ourselves with trying to show that while our opponents use it, it is madness in us not to defend ourselves with it. Experience has shown that we cannot successfully defend ourselves without it. For examples, look at the elections of last year. Our candidate for governor, with the approbation of a large portion of the party, took the field without a nomination, and in open opposition to the system. Wherever in the counties the Whigs had held conventions and nominated candidates for the legislature, the aspirants who were not nominated were induced to rebel against the nominations, and to become candidates, as is said, "on their own hook." And, go where you would into a large Whig county, you were sure to find the Whigs not contending shoulder to shoulder against the common enemy, but divided into factions, and fighting furiously with one another. The election came, and what was the result? The governor beaten—the Whig vote being decreased many thousands since 1840, although the Democratic vote had not increased any. Beaten almost everywhere for members of the legislature,—Tazewell with her four hundred Whig majority, sending a delegation half Democratic;

Vermillion, with her five hundred, doing the same; Coles, with her four hundred, sending two out of three; and Morgan, with her two hundred and fifty, sending three out of four,—and this to say nothing of the numerous other less glaring examples; the whole winding up with the aggregate number of twenty-seven Democratic representatives sent from Whig counties. As to the senators, too, the result was of the same character. And it is most worthy to be remembered that of all the Whigs in the State who ran against the regular nominees, a single one only was elected. Although they succeeded in defeating the nominees almost by scores, they too were defeated, and the spoils chucklingly borne off by the common enemy?

We do not mention the fact of many of the Whigs opposing the convention system heretofore for the purpose of censuring them. Far from it. We expressly protest against such a conclusion. We know they were generally, perhaps universally, as good and true Whigs as we ourselves claim to be. We mention it merely to draw attention to the disastrous result it produced, as an example forever hereafter to be avoided. That "union is strength" is a truth that has been known, illustrated, and declared in various ways and forms in all ages of the world. That great fabulist and philosopher,

Æsop, illustrated it by his fable of the bundle of sticks; and he whose wisdom surpasses that of all philosophers has declared that "a house divided against itself cannot stand." It is to induce our friends to act upon this important and universally acknowledged truth that we urge the adoption of the convention system. Reflection will prove that there is no other way of practically applying it. In its application we know there will be incidents temporarily painful; but, after all, those incidents will be fewer and less intense with than without the system. If two friends aspire to the same office it is certain that both cannot succeed. Would it not, then, be much less painful to have the question decided by mutual friends some time before, than to snarl and quarrel until the day of election, and then both be beaten by the common enemy?

Before leaving this subject, we think proper to remark that we do not understand the resolution as intended to recommend the application of the convention system to the nomination of candidates for the small offices no way connected with politics; though we must say we do not perceive that such an application of it would be wrong.

The seventh resolution recommends the holding of district conventions in May next, for the

purpose of nominating candidates for Congress. The propriety of this rests upon the same reasons with that of the sixth, and therefore needs no further discussion.

The eighth and ninth also relate merely to the practical application of the foregoing, and therefore need no discussion.

Before closing, permit us to add a few reflections on the present condition and future prospects of the Whig party. In almost all the States we have fallen into the minority, and despondency seems to prevail universally among us. Is there just cause for this? In 1840 we carried the nation by more than a hundred and forty thousand majority. Our opponents charged that we did it by fraudulent voting; but whatever they may have believed, we know the charge to be untrue. Where, now, is that mighty host? Have they gone over to the enemy? Let the results of the late elections answer. Every State which has fallen off from the Whig cause since 1840 has done so not by giving more Democratic votes than they did then, but by giving fewer Whig. Bouck, who was elected Democratic governor of New York last fall by more than 15,000 majority, had not then as many votes as he had in 1840, when he was beaten by seven or eight thousand. And so has it been in all the other States which have fallen away from our

cause. From this it is evident that tens of thousands in the late elections have not voted at all. Who and what are they? is an important question, as respects the future. They can come forward and give us the victory again. That all, or nearly all, of them are Whigs is most apparent. Our opponents, stung to madness by the defeat of 1840, have ever since rallied with more than their usual unanimity. It has not been they that have been kept from the polls. These facts show what the result must be, once the people again rally in their entire strength. Proclaim these facts, and predict the result; and although unthinking opponents may smile at us, the sagacious ones will "believe and tremble." And why shall the Whigs not all rally again? Are their principles less dear now than in 1840? Have any of their doctrines since then been discovered to be untrue? It is true, the victory of 1840 did not produce the happy results anticipated; but it is equally true, as we believe, that the unfortunate death of General Harrison was the cause of the failure. It was not the election of General Harrison that was expected to produce happy effects, but the measures to be adopted by his administration. By means of his death, and the unexpected course of his successor, those measures were never adopted. How could the fruits follow? The consequences we always pre-

dicted would follow the failure of those measures have followed, and are now upon us in all their horrors. By the course of Mr. Tyler the policy of our opponents has continued in operation, still leaving them with the advantage of charging all its evils upon us as the results of a Whig administration. Let none be deceived by this somewhat plausible, though entirely false charge. If they ask us for the sufficient and sound currency we promised, let them be answered that we only promised it through the medium of a national bank, which they, aided by Mr. Tyler, prevented our establishing. And let them be reminded, too, that their own policy in relation to the currency has all the time been, and still is, in full operation. Let us then again come forth in our might, and by a second victory accomplish that which death only prevented in the first. We can do it. When did the Whigs ever fail if they were fully aroused and united? Even in single States and districts, under such circumstances, defeat seldom overtakes them. Call to mind the contested elections within the last few years, and particularly those of Moore and Letcher from Kentucky, Newland and Graham from North Carolina, and the famous New Jersey case. In all these districts Locofocoism had stalked omnipotent before; but when the whole people were aroused by its enormities on

those occasions, they put it down never to rise again.

We declare it to be our solemn conviction, that the Whigs are always a majority of this nation; and that to make them always successful needs but to get them all to the polls and to vote unitedly. This is the great desideratum. Let us make every effort to attain it. At every election, let every Whig act as though he knew the result to depend upon his action. In the great contest of 1840, some more than twenty-one hundred thousand votes were cast, and so surely as there shall be that many, with the ordinary increase added, cast in 1844, that surely will a Whig be elected President of the United States.

A. LINCOLN,
S. T. LOGAN,
March 4, 1843. A. T. BLEDSOE.

## *LETTER TO JOHN BENNETT

SPRINGFIELD, March 7, 1843.

*Friend Bennett:* Your letter of this day was handed me by Mr. Miles. It is too late now to effect the object you desire. On yesterday morning the most of the Whig members from this District got together and agreed to hold the convention at Tremont in Tazewell County. I am sorry to hear that any of the Whigs of your

County, or indeed of any County, should longer be against conventions. On last Wednesday evening a meeting of all the Whigs then here from all parts of the state was held, and the question of the propriety of conventions was brought up and fully discussed, and at the end of the discussion a resolution recommending the system of conventions to all the Whigs of the state was unanimously adopted. Other resolutions were also passed, all of which will appear in the next Journal. The meeting also appointed a committee to draft an address to the people of the state, which address will also appear in the next Journal.

In it you will find a brief argument in favor of conventions—and although I wrote it myself I will say to you that it is conclusive upon the point and can not be reasonably answered. The right way for you to do is hold your meeting and appoint delegates any how, and if there be any who will not take part, let it be so. The matter will work so well this time that even they who now oppose will come in next time.

The convention is to be held at Tremont on the 5th of April and according to the rule we have adopted your County is to have delegates—being double the number of your representation.

If there be any good Whig who is disposed to

stick out against conventions get him at least to read the argument in their favor in the address.

Yours as ever.

[Without signature.]

## Letter to Joshua F. Speed

Springfield, March 24, 1843.

*Dear Speed:* . . . We had a meeting of the Whigs of the county here on last Monday to appoint delegates to a district convention; and Baker beat me, and got the delegation instructed to go for him. The meeting, in spite of my attempt to decline it, appointed me one of the delegates; so that in getting Baker the nomination I shall be fixed a good deal like a fellow who is made a groomsman to a man that has cut him out and is marrying his own dear "gal." About the prospects of your having a namesake at our town, can't say exactly yet.

A. Lincoln.

## Letter to Martin M. Morris[1]

Springfield, Illinois, March 26, 1843.

FRIEND MORRIS: Your letter of the 23d was received on yesterday morning, and for which (instead of an excuse, which you thought proper to ask) I tender you my sincere thanks. It is truly gratifying to me to learn that while the people of Sangamon have cast me off, my old friends of Menard, who have known me longest and best, stick to me. It would astonish, if not amuse, the older citizens to learn that I (a stranger, friendless, uneducated, penniless boy, working on a flatboat at ten dollars per month) have been put down here as the candidate of pride, wealth, and aristocratic family distinction. Yet so, chiefly, it was. There was, too, the strangest combination of church influence against me. Baker is a Campbellite; and therefore, as I suppose, with few exceptions got all that church. My wife has some relations in the Presbyterian

[1] For eight successive years Lincoln had been a member of the General Assembly of Illinois. In 1842 he decided to become a candidate for Congress, contesting the nomination with E. D. Baker, "the Prince Rupert of battle and debate." Neither, however, were successful, for the nomination of 1843 went to J. J. Hardin, a "dark horse."

churches, and some with the Episcopal churches; and therefore, wherever it would tell, I was set down as either the one or the other, while it was everywhere contended that no Christian ought to go for me, because I belonged to no church, was suspected of being a deist, and had talked about fighting a duel. With all these things, Baker, of course, had nothing to do. Nor do I complain of them. As to his own church going for him, I think that was right enough, and as to the influences I have spoken of in the other, though they were very strong, it would be grossly untrue and unjust to charge that they acted upon them in a body, or were very near so. I only mean that those influences levied a tax of a considerable per cent. upon my strength throughout the religious controversy. But enough of this.

You say that in choosing a candidate for Congress you have an equal right with Sangamon, and in this you are undoubtedly correct. In agreeing to withdraw if the Whigs of Sangamon should go against me, I did not mean that they alone were worth consulting, but that if she, with her heavy delegation, should be against me, it would be impossible for me to succeed, and therefore I had as well decline. And in relation to Menard having rights, permit me fully to recognize them, and to express the opinion, that if

she and Mason act circumspectly, they will in the convention be able so far to enforce their rights as to decide absolutely which one of the candidates shall be successful. Let me show the reason of this. Hardin, or some other Morgan candidate, will get Putnam, Marshall, Woodford, Tazewell, and Logan—making sixteen. Then you and Mason, having three, can give the victory to either side.

You say you shall instruct your delegates for me, unless I object. I certainly shall not object. That would be too pleasant a compliment for me to tread in the dust. And besides, if anything should happen (which, however, is not probable) by which Baker should be thrown out of the fight, I would be at liberty to accept the nomination if I could get it. I do, however, feel myself bound not to hinder him in any way from getting the nomination. I should despise myself were I to attempt it. I think, then, it would be proper for your meeting to appoint three delegates, and to instruct them to go for some one as a first choice, some one else as a second, and perhaps some one as a third; and if in those instructions I were named as the first choice, it would gratify me very much. If you wish to hold the balance of power, it is important for you to attend to and secure the vote of Mason also. You should be sure to have men

appointed delegates that you know you can safely confide in. If yourself and James Short were appointed from your county, all would be safe; but whether Jim's woman affair a year ago might not be in the way of his appointment is a question. I don't know whether you know it, but I know him to be as honorable a man as there is in the world. You have my permission, and even request, to show this letter to Short; but to no one else, unless it be a very particular friend, who you know will not speak of it.

Yours as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

P. S. Will you write me again?

## LETTER TO MARTIN M. MORRIS

April 14, 1843.

*Friend Morris:* I have heard it intimated that Baker has been attempting to get you or Miles, or both of you, to violate the instructions of the meeting that appointed you, and to go for him. I have insisted, and still insist, that this cannot be true. Surely Baker would not do the like. As well might Hardin ask me to vote for him in the convention. Again, it is said there will be an attempt to get up instructions in your county requiring you to go for Baker. This is all wrong. Upon the same rule, why might not I

fly from the decision against me in Sangamon, and get up instructions to their delegates to go for me? There are at least 1200 Whigs in the county that took no part, and yet I would as soon put my head in the fire as to attempt it. Besides, if any one should get the nomination by such extraordinary means, all harmony in the district would inevitably be lost. Honest Whigs (and very nearly all of them are honest) would not quietly abide such enormities. I repeat, such an attempt on Baker's part cannot be true. Write me at Springfield how the matter is. Don't show or speak of this letter. A. LINCOLN.

## *LETTER TO J. J. HARDIN

SPRINGFIELD, May 11th, 1843.

*Friend Hardin:* Butler informs me that he received a letter from you, in which you expressed some doubt whether the Whigs of Sangamon will support you cordially. You may, at once, dismiss all fears on that subject. We have already resolved to make a particular effort to give you the very largest majority possible in our county. From this, no Whig of the county dissents. We have many objects for doing it. We make it a matter of honor and pride to do it; we do it, because we love the Whig cause; we do it, because we like you personally;

and last, we wish to convince you, that we do not bear that hatred to Morgan county, that you people have so long seemed to imagine. You will see by the journal of this week, that we propose, upon pain of losing a Barbecue, to give you twice as great a majority in this county as you shall receive in your own. I got up the proposal.

Who of the five appointed, is to write the District address? I did the labor of writing one address this year; and got thunder for my reward. Nothing new here. Yours as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

P. S.—I wish you would measure one of the largest of those swords, we took to Alton, and write me the length of it, from tip of the point to tip of the hilt, in feet and inches, I have a dispute about the length. A. L.

## LETTER TO JOSHUA F. SPEED

SPRINGFIELD, May 18, 1843.

*Dear Speed:* Yours of the 9th instant is duly received, which I do not meet as a "bore," but as a most welcome visitor. I will answer the business part of it first. . . .

In relation to our Congress matter here, you were right in supposing I would support the nominee. Neither Baker nor I, however, is the

man, but Hardin, so far as I can judge from present appearances. We shall have no split or trouble about the matter; all will be harmony. In relation to the "coming events" about which Butler wrote you, I had not heard one word before I got your letter; but I have so much confidence in the judgment of a Butler on such a subject that I incline to think there may be some reality in it. What day does Butler appoint? By the way, how do "events" of the same sort come on in your family? Are you possessing houses and lands, and oxen and asses, and men-servants and maid-servants, and begetting sons and daughters? We are not keeping house, but boarding at the Globe Tavern, which is very well kept now by a widow lady of the name of Beck. Our room (the same that Dr. Wallace occupied there) and boarding only costs us four dollars a week. Ann Todd was married something more than a year since to a fellow by the name of Campbell, and who, Mary says, is pretty much of a "dunce," though he has a little money and property. They live in Boonville, Missouri, and have not been heard from lately enough for me to say anything about her health. I reckon it will scarcely be in our power to visit Kentucky this year. Besides poverty and the necessity of attending to business, those "coming events," I suspect, would be somewhat in the way. I most

heartily wish you and your Fanny would not fail to come. Just let us know the time, and we will have a room provided for you at our house, and all be merry together for a while. Be sure to give my respects to your mother and family; assure her that if ever I come near her, I will not fail to call and see her. Mary joins in sending love to your Fanny and you. Yours as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

*MEMORANDUM, January 16, 1844.

This memorandum witnesseth that Charles Dresser and Abraham Lincoln of Springfield, Illinois, have contracted with each other as follows:

The said Dresser is to convey to or procure to be conveyed to said Lincoln, by a clear title in fee simple, the entire premises (ground and improvements) in Springfield, on which said Dresser now resides, and give him possession of said premises, on or before the first day of April next—for which said Lincoln, at or before the same day, is to pay to said Dresser twelve hundred dollars, or what said Dresser shall then at his option, accept as equivalent thereto; and also to procure to be conveyed to said Dresser, by a clear title in fee simple, the entire premises (ground and building) in Springfield, on the block immediately West of the Public square,

the building on which is now occupied by H. A. Hough as a shop, being the same premises some time since conveyed by N. W. Edwards and wife to said Lincoln and Stephen T. Logan—Said Dresser takes upon himself to arrange with said Hough for the possession of said shop and premises.

CHARLES DRESSER,
A. LINCOLN.

Jan'y 16, 1844.
(Signed duplicates.)

## *LETTER TO J. J. HARDIN

SPRINGFIELD, May 21, 1844.

*Dear Hardin:* Knowing that you have correspondents enough, I have forborne to trouble you heretofore; and I now only do so, to get you to set a matter right which has got wrong with one of our best friends. It is old uncle Thomas Campbell of Spring Creek—(Berlin P. O.) He has received several documents from you, and he says they are old newspapers and documents, having no sort of interest in them. He is, therefore, getting a strong impression that you treat him with disrespect. This, I know, is a mistaken impression; and you must correct it. The way, I leave to yourself. Rob't W. Canfield, says he would like to have a document or two from you.

The Locos here are in considerable trouble

about Van Buren's letter on Texas, and the Virginia electors. They are growing sick of the Tariff question; and consequently are much confounded at V. B.'s cutting them off from the new Texas question. Nearly half the leaders swear they won't stand it. Of those are Ford, T. Campbell, Ewing, Calhoun and others. They don't exactly say they won't vote for V. B., but they say he will not be the candidate, and that *they* are for Texas anyhow. As ever yours,

A. LINCOLN.

## *LETTER TO GENERAL JOHN J. HARDIN

SPRINGFIELD, January 19, 1845.

*Dear General:* I do not wish to join in your proposal of a new plan for the selection of a Whig candidate for Congress, because—

1st. I am entirely satisfied with the old system under which you and Baker were successively nominated and elected to Congress; and because the Whigs of the District are well acquainted with the system, and so far as I know or believe, are well satisfied with it. If the old system be thought to be vague, as to all the delegates of the county voting the same way; or as to instructions to them as to whom they are to vote for; or as to filling vacancies,—I am willing to join in a provision to make these matters certain.

2nd. As to your proposals that a poll shall be opened in *every* precinct, and that the whole shall take place on the *same* day, I do not personally object. They seem to me to be not unfair; and I forbear to join in proposing them, only because I choose to leave the decision in each county to the Whigs of the county, to be made as their own judgment and convenience may dictate.

3rd. As to your proposed stipulation that all the candidates shall remain in their own counties, and restrain their friends in the same—it seems to me that on reflection you will see, the fact of your having been in Congress has, in various ways, so spread your name in the District, as to give you a decided advantage in such a stipulation. I appreciate your desire to keep down excitement; and I promise you "keep cool" under all circumstances.

4th. I have already said I am satisfied with the old system under which such good men have triumphed, and that I desire no departure from its principles. But if there must be a departure from it, I shall insist upon a more accurate and just apportionment of delegates, or representative votes, to the constituent body, than exists by the old; and which you propose to retain in your new plan. If we take the entire population of the Counties as shown by the late census, we

shall see by the old plan, and by your proposed new plan,—

Morgan county, with a population of 16,-541, has but.....8 votes
While Sangamon, with 18,697—2,156 greater, has but.....8 votes
So Scott with 6,553 has.....4 votes
While Tazewell with 7,615 has 1,062 greater, has but.....4 votes
So Mason with 3,135 has.....1 vote
While Logan with 3,907, 772 greater, has but .....1 vote

And so on in a less degree the matter runs through all the counties, being not only wrong in principle, but the advantage of it being all manifestly in your favor with one slight exception, in the comparison of two counties not here mentioned.

Again, if we take the Whig votes of the counties as shown by the late Presidential election as a basis, the thing is still worse. Take a comparison of the same six counties—

Morgan with her 1443 whig votes has...8 votes
Sangamon with her 1837, 394 greater, only has.....8 votes
Mason with her 255 has.....1 vote
Logan with her 310, 55 greater, has only.1 vote
Scott with her 670 has.....4 votes

Tazewell with her 1011, 341 greater, has only .....4 votes

It seems to me most obvious that the old system needs adjustment in nothing so much as in this: and still, by your proposal, no notice is taken of it. I have always been in the habit of acceding to almost any proposal that a friend would make and I am truly sorry that I cannot in this. I perhaps ought to mention that some friends at different places are endeavoring to secure the honor of the sitting of the convention at their towns respectively, and I fear that they would not feel much complimented if we shall make a bargain that it should sit no where.

Yours as ever, A. LINCOLN.

## *LETTER TO MR. WILLIAMS

SPRINGFIELD, March 1, 1845.

*Friend Williams:* The supreme court adjourned this morning for the term. Your cases of Reinhardt vs. Schuyler, Bunce vs. Schuyler, Dickhut vs. Dunell, and Sullivan vs. Andrews are continued. Hinman vs. Pope I wrote you concerning some time ago. McNutt et al. vs. Bean and Thompson is reversed and remanded.

Fitzpatrick vs. Brady et al. is reversed and remanded with leave to complainant to amend his bill so as to show the real consideration given for the land.

Bunce against Graves, the court confirmed, wherefore, in accordance with your directions, I moved to have the case remanded to enable you to take a new trial in the court below. The court allowed the motion; of which I am glad, and I guess you are.

This, I believe, is all as to court business. The canal men have got their measure through the legislature pretty much or quite in the shape they desired. Nothing else now.

Yours, as ever, A. LINCOLN.

## *LETTER TO WILLIAMSON DURLEY

SPRINGFIELD, October 3, 1845.

When I saw you at home, it was agreed that I should write to you and your brother Madison. Until I then saw you I was not aware of your being what is generally called an Abolitionist, or, as you call yourself, a Liberty man, though I well knew there were many such in your country.

I was glad to hear that you intended to attempt to bring about, at the next election in Putnam, a union of the Whigs proper and such of the Liberty men as are Whigs in principle on all questions save only that of slavery. So far as I can perceive, by such union neither party need yield anything on *the* point in difference between them. If the Whig abolitionists

of New York had voted with us last fall, Mr. Clay would now be President, Whig principles in the ascendant, and Texas not annexed; whereas, by the division, all that either had at stake in the contest was lost. And, indeed, it was extremely probable, beforehand, that such would be the result. As I always understood, the Liberty men deprecated the annexation of Texas extremely; and this being so, why they should refuse to cast their votes [so] as to prevent it, even to me seemed wonderful. What was their process of reasoning, I can only judge from what a single one of them told me. It was this: "We are not to do evil that good may come." This general proposition is doubtless correct; but did it apply? If by your votes you could have prevented the *extension,* etc., of slavery would it not have been *good,* and not *evil,* so to have used your votes, even though it involved the casting of them for a slave-holder? By the *fruit* the tree is to be known. An *evil* tree cannot bring forth *good* fruit. If the fruit of electing Mr. Clay would have been to prevent the extension of slavery, could the act of electing have been evil?

But I will not argue further. I perhaps ought to say that individually I never was much interested in the Texas question. I never could see much good to come of annexation, inasmuch as they were already a free republican people on

our own model. On the other hand, I never could very clearly see how the annexation would augment the evil of slavery. It always seemed to me that slaves would be taken there in about equal numbers, with or without annexation. And if more *were* taken because of annexation, still there would be just so many the fewer left where they were taken from. It is possibly true, to some extent, that, with annexation, some slaves may be sent to Texas and continued in slavery that otherwise might have been liberated. To whatever extent this may be true, I think annexation an evil. I hold it to be a paramount duty of us in the free States, due to the Union of the States, and perhaps to liberty itself (paradox though it may seem), to let the slavery of the other States alone; while, on the other hand, I hold it to be equally clear that we should never knowingly lend ourselves, directly or indirectly, to prevent that slavery from dying a natural death—to find new places for it to live in, when it can no longer exist in the old. Of course I am not now considering what would be our duty in cases of insurrection among the slaves. To recur to the Texas question, I understand the Liberty men to have viewed annexation as a much greater evil than ever I did; and I would like to convince you, if I could, that they could have prevented it, if they had chosen.

I intend this letter for you and Madison together; and if you and he or either shall think fit to drop me a line, I shall be pleased.

Yours with respect, A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO B. F. JAMES

SPRINGFIELD, November 17, 1845.

*Friend James:* The paper at Pekin has nominated Hardin for governor; and, commenting on this, the Alton paper indirectly nominated him for Congress. It would give Hardin a great start, and perhaps use me up, if the Whig papers of the district should nominate him for Congress. If your feelings toward me are the same as when I saw you (which I have no reason to doubt), I wish you would let nothing appear in your paper which may operate against me. You understand. Matters stand just as they did when I saw you. Baker is certainly off the track, and I fear Hardin intends to be on it.

In relation to the business you wrote me of some time since, I suppose the marshal called on you; and we think it can be adjusted at court to the satisfaction of you and friend Thompson.

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO B. F. JAMES

SPRINGFIELD, November 24, 1845.

*Friend James:* Yours of the 19th was not received till this morning. The error I fell into

in relation to the Pekin paper I discovered myself the day after I wrote you. The way I fell into it was that Stuart (John T.) met me in the court, and told me about a nomination having been made in the Pekin paper, and about the comments upon it in the Alton paper; and without seeing either paper myself, I wrote you. In writing to you, I only meant to call your attention to the matter; and that done, I knew all would be right with you. Of course I should not have thought this necessary if at the time I had known that the nomination had been made in your paper. And let me assure you that if there is anything in my letter indicating an opinion that the nomination for governor, which I supposed to have been made in the Pekin paper, was operating or could operate against me, such was not my meaning. Now that I know that nomination was made by you, I say that it may do me good, while I do not see that it can do me harm. But, while the subject is in agitation, should any of the papers in the district nominate the same man for Congress, that would do me harm; and it was that which I wished to guard against. Let me assure you that I do not for a moment suppose that what you have done is ill-judged, or that anything that you shall do will be. It was not to object to the course of the Pekin paper (as I thought it), but to guard

against any falling into the wake of the Alton paper, that I wrote.

You perhaps have noticed the "Journal's" article of last week upon the same subject. It was written without any consultation with me, but I was told by Francis of its purport before it was published. I chose to let it go as it was, lest it should be suspected that I was attempting to juggle Hardin out of a nomination for Congress by juggling him into one for governor. If you, and the other papers a little more distant from me, choose to take the same course you have, of course I have no objection. After you shall have received this, I think we shall fully understand each other, and that our views as to the effect of these things are not dissimilar. Confidential, of course. Yours as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## *LETTER TO DR. ROBERT BOAL

SPRINGFIELD, January 7, 1846.

*Dear Doctor:* Since I saw you last fall, I have often thought of writing you, as it was then understood I would, but, on reflection, I have always found that I had nothing new to tell you. All has happened as I then told you I expected it would—Baker's declining, Hardin's taking the track, and so on.

If Hardin and I stood precisely equal, if

*neither* of us had been to Congress, or, if we *both* had—it would not only accord with what I have always done, for the sake of peace, to give way to him; and I expect I should do it. That *I* can voluntarily postpone my pretentions, when they are no more than equal to those to which they are postponed, you have yourself seen. But to yield to Hardin under present circumstances, seems to me as nothing else than yielding to one who would gladly sacrifice me altogether. This, I would rather not submit to. That Hardin is talented, energetic, usually generous and magnanimous, I have, before this, affirmed to you, and do not now deny. You know that my only argument is that "turn about is fair play." This he practically at least, denies.

If it would not be taxing you too much, I wish you would write me, telling the aspect of things in your country, or rather your district; and also, send the names of some of your Whig neighbors, to whom I might, with propriety, write. Unless I can get some one to do this, Hardin, with his old franking list, will have the advantage of me. My reliance for a fair shake (and I want nothing more) in your county is chiefly on you, because of your position and standing, and because I am acquainted with so few others. Let me hear from you soon. Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

## Letter to B. F. James

Springfield, January 14, 1846.

FRIEND JAMES: Yours of the 10th was not received until this morning. I cannot but be pleased with its contents. I saw Henry's communication in your paper, as also your editorial remarks, neither of which, in my opinion, was in any way misjudged,—both quite the thing. I think just as you do concerning the dictation of the course of the Alton paper, and also concerning its utter harmlessness. As to the proposition to hold the convention at Petersburg, I will at once tell you all I know and all I feel. A good friend of ours there—John Bennett—wrote me that he thought it would do good with the Whigs of Menard to see a respectable convention conducted in good style. They are a little disinclined to adopt the convention system; and Bennett thinks some of their prejudices would be done away by their having the convention amongst them. At his request, therefore, I had the little paragraph put in the "Journal." This is all I know. Now as to what I feel. I feel a desire that they of Petersburg should be

gratified, if it can be done without a sacrifice of the wishes of others, and without detriment to the cause—nothing more. I can gain nothing in the contest by having it there. I showed your letter to Stuart, and he thinks there is something in your suggestion of holding it at your town. I should be pleased if I could concur with you in the hope that my name would be the only one presented to the convention; but I cannot. Hardin is a man of desperate energy and perseverance, and one that never backs out; and, I fear, to think otherwise is to be deceived in the character of our adversary. I would rejoice to be spared the labor of a contest; but "being in," I shall go it thoroughly, and to the bottom. As to my being able to make a break in the lower counties, I tell you that I can possibly get Cass, but I do not think I will. Morgan and Scott are beyond my reach; Menard is safe to me; Mason, neck and neck; Logan is mine. To make the matter sure, your entire senatorial district must be secured. Of this I suppose Tazewell is safe; and I have much done in both the other counties. In Woodford I have Davenport, Simons, Willard, Bracken, Perry, Travis, Dr. Hazzard, and the Clarks and some others, all specially committed. At Lacon, in Marshall, the very most active friend I have in the district (if I except yourself) is at work. Through him

I have procured their names, and written to three or four of the most active Whigs in each precinct of the county. Still I wish you all in Tazewell to keep your eyes continually on Woodford and Marshall. Let no opportunity of making a mark escape. When they shall be safe, all will be safe, I think.

The Beardstown paper is entirely in the hands of my friends. The editor is a Whig, and personally dislikes Hardin. When the supreme court shall adjourn (which it is thought will be about the 15th of February), it is my intention to take a quiet trip through the towns and neighborhoods of Logan County, Delevan, Tremont, and on to and through the upper counties. Don't speak of this, or let it relax any of your vigilance. When I shall reach Tremont, we will talk over everything at large. Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

## *LETTER TO JOHN BENNETT

SPRINGFIELD, January 15, 1846.

*Friend John:* Nathan Dresser is here, and speaks as though the contest between Hardin and me is to be doubtful in Menard County. I know he is candid and this alarms me some. I asked him to tell me the names of the men that were going strong for Hardin; he said Morris was about as strong as any. Now tell me, is Morris

going it openly? You remember you wrote me, that he would be neutral. Nathan also said that some man who he could not remember had said lately that Menard County was going to decide the contest and that that made the contest very doubtful. Do you know who that was? Don't fail to write me instantly on receiving telling me all—particularly the names of those who are going strong against me. Yours as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## *LETTER TO JOHN BENNETT

SPRINGFIELD, January 16, 1846.

*Dear John:* The enclosed letters I wrote last night, but when I went to the Post-office this morning your mail had left about half an hour. So I send them by Mr. Harris. Will you please take out the one addressed to you, and drop the others in your Post-office, unless you see the men to hand them to in person, in which case please do that. Yours as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO B. F. JAMES

SPRINGFIELD, January 16, 1846.

*Dear James:* A plan is on foot to change the mode of selecting the candidate for this district. The movement is intended to injure me, and, if effected, most likely would injure me to some

extent. I have not time to give particulars now; but I want you to let nothing prevent your getting an article in your paper of this week, taking strong ground for the old system under which Hardin and Baker were nominated, without seeming to know or suspect that any one desires to change it. I have written Dr. Henry more at length, and he will probably call and consult with you on getting up the article; but whether he does or not, don't fail, on any account, to get it in this week. A. LINCOLN.

### *LETTER TO N. J. ROCKWELL

SPRINGFIELD, January 21, 1846.

*Dear Sir:* You perhaps know that General Hardin and I have a contest for the Whig nomination for Congress for this district. He has had a turn and my argument is "Turn about is fair play." I shall be pleased if this strikes you as a sufficient argument. Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

### LETTER TO B. F. JAMES

SPRINGFIELD, January 27, 1846.

*Dear James:* Yours, inclosing the article from the "Whig," is received. In my judgment, you have hit the matter exactly right. I believe it is too late to get the article in the "Journal" of this week; but Dickinson will understand it just

as well from your paper, knowing as he does your position toward me. More than all, I wrote him at the same time I did you. As to suggestions for the committee, I would say appoint the convention for the first Monday of May. As to the place, I can hardly make a suggestion, so many points desiring it. I was at Petersburg Saturday and Sunday, and they are very anxious for it there. A friend has also written me desiring it at Beardstown.

I would have the committee leave the mode of choosing delegates to the Whigs of the different counties, as may best suit them respectively. I would have them propose, for the sake of uniformity, that the delegates should all be instructed as to their man, and the delegation of each county should go as a unit. If, without this, some counties should send united delegations and others divided ones, it might make bad work. Also have it proposed that when the convention shall meet, if there shall be any absent delegates, the members present may fill the vacancies with persons to act under the same instructions which may be known to have been given to such absentees. You understand. Other particulars I leave to you. I am sorry to say I am afraid I cannot go to Mason, so as to attend to your business; but if I shall determine to go there, I will write you.

Do you hear anything from Woodford and Marshall? Davenport, ten days ago, passed through here, and told me Woodford is safe; but, though in hope, I am not entirely easy about Marshall. I have so few personal acquaintances in that county that I cannot get at [it] right. Dickinson is doing all that any one man can do; but it seems like it is an overtask for one. I suppose Dr. Henry will be with you on Saturday. I got a letter from him to-day on the same subject as yours, and shall write him before Saturday.

Yours truly,
A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO —— JOHNSTON [1]

TREMONT, April 18, 1846.

*Friend Johnston:* Your letter, written some six weeks since, was received in due course, and also the paper with the parody. It is true, as suggested it might be, that I have never seen Poe's "Raven"; and I very well know that a parody is almost entirely dependent for its interest upon the reader's acquaintance with the

[1] Lincoln had a taste for poetry, but rather for the morbid sort, such as his favorite, "Oh why should the Spirit of mortal be proud." Among his favorite poets were Shakespeare, Burns, Byron and Tom Hood. In contrast to the melancholy strain evinced in the verse sent his correspondent, Johnston, it is interesting to read some humorous doggerel written by Lincoln as early as 1826, and quoted in Herndon's "Life:"

original. Still there is enough in the polecat, self-considered, to afford one several hearty laughs. I think four or five of the last stanzas are decidedly funny, particularly where Jeremiah "scrubbed and washed, and prayed and fasted."

I have not your letter now before me; but, from memory, I think you ask me who is the author of the piece I sent you, and that you do so ask as to indicate a slight suspicion that I myself am the author. Beyond all question, I am not the author. I would give all I am worth, and go in debt, to be able to write so fine a piece

"ADAM AND EVE'S WEDDING SONG

"When Adam was created
He dwelt in Eden's shade,
As Moses has recorded,
And soon a bride was made.

"Ten thousand times ten thousand
Of creatures swarmed around
Before a bride was formed,
And yet no mate was found.

"The Lord then was not willing
That man should be alone,
But caused a sleep upon him,
And from him took a bone.

"And closed the flesh instead thereof.
And then he took the same
And of it made a woman,
And brought her to the man.

as I think that is. Neither do I know who is the author. I met it in a straggling form in a newspaper last summer, and I remember to have seen it once before, about fifteen years ago, and this is all I know about it. The piece of poetry of my own which I alluded to, I was led to write under the following circumstances. In the fall of 1844, thinking I might aid some to carry the State of Indiana for Mr. Clay, I went into the neighborhood in that State in which I was raised, where my mother and only sister were buried, and from which I had been absent about fifteen years. That part of the country is, within itself, as unpoetical as any spot of the earth; but still, seeing it and its objects and inhabitants aroused feelings

"Then Adam he rejoiced
To see his loving bride
A part of his own body,
The product of his side.

"The woman was not taken
From Adam's feet we see,
So he must not abuse her,
The meaning seems to be.

"The woman was not taken
From Adam's head, we know,
To show she must not rule him —
'Tis evidently so.

"The woman she was taken
From under Adam's arm,
So she must be protected
From injuries and harm."

in me which were certainly poetry; though whether my expression of those feelings is poetry is quite another question. When I got to writing, the change of subjects divided the thing into four little divisions or cantos, the first only of which I send you now and may send the others hereafter. Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

My childhood's home I see again,
And sadden with the view;
And still, as memory crowds my brain,
There 's pleasure in it too.

O Memory! thou midway world
'Twixt earth and paradise,
Where things decayed and loved ones lost
In dreamy shadows rise,

And, freed from all that 's earthly vile,
Seem hallowed, pure, and bright,
Like scenes in some enchanted isle
All bathed in liquid light.

As dusky mountains please the eye
When twilight chases day;
As bugle-notes that, passing by,
In distance die away;

As leaving some grand waterfall,
We, lingering, list its roar—
So memory will hallow all
We 've known, but know no more.

Near twenty years have passed away
Since here I bid farewell
To woods and fields, and scenes of play,
And playmates loved so well.

Where many were, but few remain
Of old familiar things;
But seeing them, to mind again
The lost and absent brings.

The friends I left that parting day,
How changed, as time has sped!
Young childhood grown, strong manhood gray,
And half of all are dead.

I hear the loved survivors tell
How nought from death could save,
Till every sound appears a knell,
And every spot a grave.

I range the fields with pensive tread,
And pace the hollow rooms,
And feel (companion of the dead)
I 'm living in the tombs.

## *Letter to James Berdan

Springfield, April 26, 1846.

*Dear Sir:* I thank you for the promptness with which you answered my letter from Bloomington. I also thank you for the frankness with which you comment upon a certain part of my letter; because that comment affords me an opportunity of trying to express myself better than I did before, seeing, as I do, that in that part of my letter, you have not understood me as I intended to be understood. In speaking of the *"dissatisfaction"* of men who yet mean to do no wrong, &c., I meant no special application of what I said to the Whigs of Morgan, or of Morgan & Scott. I only had in my mind the fact, that previous to General Hardin's withdrawal some of his friends and some of mine had become a little warm; and I felt, and meant to say, that for them now to meet face to face and converse together was the best way to efface any remnant of unpleasant feeling, if any such existed. I did not suppose that General Hardin's friends were in any greater need of having their feelings corrected than mine were. Since I saw you at Jacksonville, I have had no more suspicion of the Whigs of Morgan than of those of any other part of the District. I write this only

to try to remove any impression that I distrust you and the other Whigs of your county.

Yours truly, A. LINCOLN.

### *LETTER TO JAMES BERDAN

SPRINGFIELD, May 7th, 1846.

*Dear Sir:* It is a matter of high moral obligation, if not of necessity, for me to attend the Coles and Edwards courts. I have some cases in both of them, in which the parties have my promise, and are depending upon me. The court commences in Coles on the second Monday, and in Edgar on the third. Your court in Morgan commences on the fourth Monday; and it is my purpose to be with you then, and make a speech. I mention the Coles and Edgar courts in order that if I should not reach Jacksonville at the time named you may understand the reason why. I do not, however, think there is much danger of my being detained; as I shall go with a purpose not to be, and consequently shall engage in no new cases that might delay me. Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

### LETTER TO —— JOHNSTON

SPRINGFIELD, September 6, 1846.

*Friend Johnston:* You remember when I wrote you from Tremont last spring, sending you a little canto of what I called poetry, I

promised to bore you with another some time. I now fulfil the promise. The subject of the present one is an insane man; his name is Matthew Gentry. He is three years older than I, and when we were boys we went to school together. He was rather a bright lad, and the son of *the* rich man of a very poor neighborhood. At the age of nineteen he unaccountably became furiously mad, from which condition he gradually settled down into harmless insanity. When, as I told you in my other letter, I visited my old home in the fall of 1844, I found him still lingering in this wretched condition. In my poetizing mood, I could not forget the impression his case made upon me. Here is the result:

But here's an object more of dread
  Than aught the grave contains—
A human form with reason fled,
  While wretched life remains.

When terror spread, and neighbors ran
  Your dangerous strength to bind,
And soon, a howling, crazy man,
  Your limbs were fast confined:

How then you strove and shrieked aloud,
  Your bones and sinews bared;
And fiendish on the gazing crowd
  With burning eyeballs glared;

And begged and swore, and wept and prayed,
With maniac laughter joined;
How fearful were these signs displayed
By pangs that killed the mind!

And when at length the drear and long
Time soothed thy fiercer woes,
How plaintively thy mournful song
Upon the still night rose!

I 've heard it oft as if I dreamed
Far distant, sweet and lone,
The funeral dirge it ever seemed
Of reason dead and gone.

To drink its strains I 've stole away,
All stealthily and still,
Ere yet the rising god of day
Had streaked the eastern hill.

Air held her breath; trees with the spell
Seemed sorrowing angels round,
Whose swelling tears in dewdrops fell
Upon the listening ground.

But this is past, and naught remains
That raised thee o'er the brute;
Thy piercing shrieks and soothing strain
Are like, forever mute.

Now fare thee well! More thou the cause
  Than subject now of woe.
All mental pangs by time's kind laws
  Hast lost the power to know.

O death! thou awe-inspiring prince
  That keepst the world in fear,
Why dost thou tear more blest ones hence,
  And leave him lingering here?

If I should ever send another, the subject will be a "Bear-Hunt." Yours as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO JOSHUA F. SPEED[1]

SPRINGFIELD, October 22, 1846.

*Dear Speed:* . . . You, no doubt, assign the suspension of our correspondence to the true philosophic cause; though it must be confessed by both of us that this is rather a cold reason for allowing a friendship such as ours to die out by degrees. I propose now that, upon receipt of this, you shall be considered in my debt, and under obligations to pay soon, and that neither shall

[1] The second son of the Lincolns, whose birth is recorded in this letter to Speed, was christened Edward Baker. He died when five years old. The other children were: Robert Todd, born in 1843 (still living); William Wallace, born in 1850, died at the White House in 1862; and Thomas, born in 1853, died in 1871.

remain long in arrears hereafter. Are you agreed?

Being elected to Congress, though I am very grateful to our friends for having done it, has not pleased me as much as I expected.

We have another boy, born the 10th of March. He is very much such a child as Bob was at his age, rather of a longer order. Bob is "short and low," and I expect always will be. He talks very plainly,—almost as plainly as anybody. He is quite smart enough. I sometimes fear that he is one of the little rare-ripe sort that are smarter at about five than ever after. He has a great deal of that sort of mischief that is the offspring of such animal spirits. Since I began this letter, a messenger came to tell me Bob was lost; but by the time I reached the house his mother had found him and had him whipped, and by now, very likely, he is run away again. Mary has read your letter, and wishes to be remembered to Mrs. Speed and you, in which I most sincerely join her. As ever yours,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO —— JOHNSTON

SPRINGFIELD, February 25, 1847.

*Dear Johnston:* Yours of the 2d of December was duly delivered to me by Mr. Williams. To say the least, I am not at all displeased with your

proposal to publish the poetry, or doggerel, or whatever else it may be called, which I sent you. I consent that it may be done, together with the third canto, which I now send you. Whether the prefatory remarks in my letter shall be published with the verses, I leave entirely to your discretion; but let names be suppressed by all means. I have not sufficient hope of the verses attracting any favorable notice to tempt me to risk being ridiculed for having written them.

Why not drop into the paper, at the same time, the "half dozen stanzas of your own"? Or if, for any reason, it suit your feelings better, send them to me, and I will take pleasure in putting them in the paper here. Family well, and nothing new. Yours sincerely,

A. LINCOLN.

## Fragments of Tariff Discussion [December 1, 1847?]

WHETHER the protective policy shall be finally abandoned is now the question.—Discussion and experience already had, and question now in greater dispute than ever.—Has there not been some great error in the mode of discussion?—Propose a single issue of fact, namely: From 1816 to the present, have protected articles cost us more of labor during the higher than during the lower duties upon them?—Introduce the evidence.—Analyze this issue, and try to show that it embraces the true and the whole question of the protective policy.—Intended as a test of experience.—The period selected is fair, because it is a period of peace—a period sufficiently long [to] furnish a fair average under all other causes operating on prices, a period in which various modifications of higher and lower duties have occurred.—Protected articles only are embraced. Show that these only belong to the question.—The labor price only is embraced. Show this to be correct.

. . . . . .

I suppose the true effect of duties upon prices to be as follows: If a certain duty be levied upon an article which by nature cannot be produced in this country, as three cents a pound upon coffee, the effect will be that the consumer will pay one cent more per pound than before, the producer will take one cent less, and the merchant one cent less in profits; in other words, the burden of the duty will [be] distributed over consumption, production, and commerce, and not confined to either. But if a duty amounting to full protection be levied upon an article which can be produced here with as little labor as elsewhere,—as iron,—that article will ultimately, and at no distant day, in consequence of such duty, be sold to our people cheaper than before, at least by the amount of the cost of carrying it from abroad.

First. As to useless labor. Before proceeding, however, it may be as well to give a specimen of what I conceive to be useless labor. I say, then, that all carrying, and incidents of carrying, of articles from the place of their production to a distant place for consumption, which articles could be produced of as good quality, in sufficient quantity and with as little labor, at the place of consumption as at the place carried from, is useless labor. Applying this principle to our own country by an example, let us sup-

pose that A and B are a Pennsylvania farmer and a Pennsylvania iron-maker whose lands are adjoining. Under the protective policy A is furnishing B with bread and meat, and vegetables and fruits, and food for horses and oxen, and fresh supplies of horses and oxen themselves occasionally, and receiving in exchange all the iron, iron utensils, tools, and implements he needs. In this process of exchange each receives the whole of that which the other parts with, and the reward of labor between them is perfect—each receiving the product of just so much labor as he has himself bestowed on what he parts with for it. But the change comes. The protective policy is abandoned, and A determines to buy his iron and iron manufactures of C in Europe. This he can only do by a direct or an indirect exchange of the produce of his farm for them. We will suppose the direct exchange is adopted. In this A desires to exchange ten barrels of flour —the precise product of one hundred days' labor —for the largest quantity of iron, etc., that he can get. C also wishes to exchange the precise product, in iron, of one hundred days' labor for the greatest quantity of flour he can get. In intrinsic value the things to be so exchanged are precisely equal. But before this exchange can take place, the flour must be carried from Pennsylvania to England, and the iron from England

to Pennsylvania. The flour starts. The wagoner who hauls it to Philadelphia takes a part of it to pay him for his labor; then a merchant there takes a little more for storage and forwarding commission, and another takes a little more for insurance; and then the ship-owner carries it across the water, and takes a little more of it for his trouble. Still, before it reaches C, it is tolled two or three times more for storage, drayage, commission, and so on; so that when C gets it there are but seven and a half barrels of it left. The iron, too, in its transit from England to Pennsylvania, goes through the same process of tolling; so that when it reaches A there are but three quarters of it left. The result of this case is that A and C have each parted with one hundred days' labor, and each received but seventy-five in return. That the carrying in this case was introduced by A ceasing to buy of B and turning [to] C; that it was utterly useless; and that it is ruinous in its effects upon A, are all little less than self-evident. "But," asks one, "if A is now only getting three quarters as much iron from C for ten barrels of flour as he used to get of B, why does he not turn back to B?" The answer is: "B has quit making iron, and so has none to sell." "But why did B quit making?" "Because A quit buying of him, and he had no other customer to sell to." "But surely A did

not cease buying of B with the expectation of buying of C on harder terms?" "Certainly not. Let me tell you how that was. When B was making iron as well as C, B had but one customer, this farmer A; C had four customers in Europe."

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It seems to be an opinion very generally entertained that the condition of a nation is best whenever it can buy cheapest; but this is not necessarily true, because if at the same time and by the same cause, it is compelled to sell correspondingly cheap, nothing is gained. Then it is said the best condition is when we can buy cheapest and sell dearest; but this again is not necessarily true, because with both these we might have scarcely anything to sell, or, which is the same thing, to buy with. To illustrate this, suppose a man in the present state of things is laboring the year round, at ten dollars per month, which amounts in the year to $120. A change in affairs enables him to buy supplies at half the former price, to get fifty dollars per month for his labor, but at the same time deprives him of employment during all the months of the year but one. In this case, though goods have fallen one half, and labor risen five to one, it is still plain that at the end of the year the

laborer is twenty dollars poorer than under the old state of things.

These reflections show that to reason and act correctly on this subject we must look not merely to buying cheap, nor yet to buying cheap and selling dear, but also to having constant employment, so that we may have the largest possible amount of something to sell. This matter of employment can only be secured by an ample, steady, and certain market to sell the products of our labor in.

But let us yield the point, and admit that by abandoning the protective policy our farmers can purchase their supplies of manufactured articles cheaper than by continuing it; and then let us see whether, even at that, they will upon the whole be gainers by the change. To simplify this question, let us suppose the whole agricultural interest of the country to be in the hands of one man, who has one hundred laborers in his employ; the whole manufacturing interest to be in the hands of one other man, who has twenty laborers in his employ. The farmer owns all the plow and pasture land, and the manufacturer all the iron-mines and coal-banks and sites of water-power. Each is pushing on in his own way, and obtaining supplies from the other so far as he needs,—that is, the manufacturer is buying of the farmer all the cotton he can use in

his cotton-factory; all the wool he can use in his woolen establishment; all the bread and meat, as well as all the fruits and vegetables, which are necessary for himself and all his hands in all his departments; all the corn and oats and hay which are necessary for all his horses and oxen, as well as fresh supplies of horses and oxen themselves to do all his heavy hauling about his iron-works and generally of every sort. The farmer, in turn, is buying of the manufacturer all the iron, iron tools, wooden tools, cotton goods, woolen goods, etc., that he needs in his business and for his hands. But after a while farmer discovers that were it not for the protective policy he could buy all these supplies cheaper from a European manufacturer, owing to the fact that the price of labor is only one quarter as high there as here. He and his hands are a majority of the whole, and therefore have the legal and moral right to have their interest first consulted. They throw off the protective policy, and farmer ceases buying of home manufacturer. Very soon, however, he discovers that to buy even at the cheaper rate requires something to buy with, and somehow or other he is falling short in this particular.

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In the early days of our race the Almighty

said to the first of our race, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread"; and since then, if we except the light and the air of heaven, no good thing has been or can be enjoyed by us without having first cost labor. And inasmuch as most good things are produced by labor, it follows that all such things of right belong to those whose labor has produced them. But it has so happened, in all ages of the world, that some have labored, and others have without labor enjoyed a large proportion of the fruits. This is wrong, and should not continue. To secure to each laborer the whole product of his labor, or as nearly as possible, is a worthy object of any good government.

But then a question arises, How can a government best effect this? In our own country, in its present condition, will the protective principle advance or retard this object? Upon this subject the habits of our whole species fall into three great classes—useful labor, useless labor, and idleness. Of these the first only is meritorious, and to it all the products of labor rightfully belong; but the two later, while they exist, are heavy pensioners upon the first, robbing it of a large portion of its just rights. The only remedy for this is to, so far as possible, drive useless labor and idleness out of existence. And, first, as to useless labor. Before making war

upon this, we must learn to distinguish it from the useful. It appears to me that all labor done directly and indirectly in carrying articles to the place of consumption, which could have been produced in sufficient abundance, with as little labor, at the place of consumption as at the place they were carried from, is useless labor. Let us take a few examples of the application of this principle to our own country. Iron, and everything made of iron, can be produced in sufficient abundance, and with as little labor, in the United States as anywhere else in the world; therefore all labor done in bringing iron and its fabrics from a foreign country to the United States is useless labor. The same precisely may be said of cotton, wool, and of their fabrics respectively, as well as many other articles. While the uselessness of the carrying labor is equally true of all the articles mentioned, and of many others not mentioned, it is perhaps more glaringly obvious in relation to the cotton goods we purchase from abroad. The raw cotton from which they are made itself grows in our own country, is carried by land and by water to England, is there spun, wove, dyed, stamped, etc., and then carried back again and worn in the very country where it grew, and partly by the very persons who grew it. Why should it not be spun, wove, etc., in the very neighborhood where it both grows and

is consumed, and the carrying thereby dispensed with? Has nature interposed any obstacle? Are not all the agents—animal-power, water-power, and steam-power—as good and as abundant here as elsehere? Will not as small an amount of human labor answer here as elsewhere? We may easily see that the cost of this useless labor is very heavy. It includes not only the cost of the actual carriage, but also the insurances of every kind, and the profits of the merchants through whose hands it passes. All these create a heavy burden necessarily falling upon the useful labor connected with such articles, either depressing the price to the producer or advancing it to the consumer, or, what is more probable, doing both in part.

A supposed case will serve to illustrate several points now to the purpose. A, in the interior of South Carolina, has one hundred pounds of cotton, which we suppose to be the precise product of one man's labor for twenty days. B, in Manchester, England, has one hundred yards of cotton cloth, the precise product of the same amount of labor. This lot of cotton and lot of cloth are precisesly equal to each other in their intrinsic value. But A wishes to part with his cotton for the largest quantity of cloth he can get. B also wishes to part with his cloth for the greatest quantity of cotton he can get. An ex-

change is therefore necessary; but before this can be effected, the cotton must be carried to Manchester, and the cloth to South Carolina. The cotton starts to Manchester. The man that hauls it to Charleston in his wagon takes a little of it out to pay him for his trouble; the merchant who stores it a while before the ship is ready to sail takes a little out for his trouble; the ship-owner who carries it across the water takes a little out for his trouble. Still, before it gets to Manchester it is tolled two or three times more for drayage, storage, commission, and so on; so that when it reaches B's hands there are but seventy-five pounds of it left. The cloth, too, in its transit from Manchester to South Carolina, goes through the same process of tolling; so that when it reaches A there are but seventy-five yards of it. Now, in this case, A and B have each parted with twenty days' labor, and each received but fifteen in return. But now let us suppose that B has removed to the side of A's farm in South Carolina, and has there made his lot of cloth. Is it not clear that he and A can then exchange their cloth and cotton, each getting the whole of what the other parts with?

This supposed case shows the utter uselessness of the carrying labor in all similar cases, and also the direct burden it imposes upon useful labor. And whoever will take up the train of

reflection suggested by this case, and run it out to the full extent of its just application, will be astonished at the amount of useless labor he will thus discover to be done in this very way. I am mistaken if it is not in fact many times over equal to all the real want in the world. This useless labor I would have discontinued, and those engaged in it added to the class of useful laborers. If I be asked whether I would destroy all commerce, I answer, Certainly not; I would continue it where it is necessary, and discontinue it where it is not. An instance: I would continue commerce so far as it is employed in bringing us coffee, and I would discontinue it so far as it is employed in bringing us cotton goods.

But let us yield the point, and admit that by abandoning the protective policy our farmers can purchase their supplies of manufactured articles cheaper than before; and then let us see whether, even at that, the farmers will upon the whole be gainers by the change. To simplify this question, let us suppose our whole population to consist of but twenty men. Under the prevalence of the protective policy, fifteen of these are farmers, one is a miller, one manufactures iron, one implements from iron, one cotton goods, and one woolen goods. The farmers discover that, owing to labor only costing one quar-

ter as much in Europe as here, they can buy iron, iron implements, cotton goods, and woolen goods cheaper when brought from Europe than when made by their neighbors. They are the majority, and therefore have both the legal and moral right to have their interest first consulted. They throw off the protective policy, and cease buying these articles of their neighbors. But they soon discover that to buy, and at the cheaper rate, requires something to buy with. Falling short in this particular, one of these farmers takes a load of wheat to the miller and gets it made into flour, and starts, as had been his custom, to the iron furnace. He approaches the well-known spot, but, strange to say, all is cold and still as death; no smoke rises, no furnace roars, no anvil rings. After some search he finds the owner of the desolate place, and calls out to him, "Come, Vulcan, don't you want to buy a load of flour?" "Why," says Vulcan, "I am hungry enough, to be sure,—haven't tasted bread for a week; but then you see my works are stopped, and I have nothing to give you for your flour." "But, Vulcan, why don't you go to work and get something?" "I am ready to do so. Will you hire me, farmer?" "Oh, no; I could only set you to raising wheat, and you see I have more of that already than I can get anything for." "But give me employment, and send your

flour to Europe for a market." "Why, Vulcan, how silly you talk! Don't you know they raise wheat in Europe as well as here, and that labor is so cheap there as to fix the price of flour there so low as scarcely to pay the long carriage of it from here, leaving nothing whatever to me?" "But, farmer, couldn't you pay to raise and prepare garden-stuffs, and fruits, such as radishes, cabbages, Irish and sweet potatoes, cucumbers, watermelons and musk-melons, plums, pears, peaches, applies, and the like? All these are good things, and used to sell well." "So they did use to sell well; but it was to *you* we sold them, and now you tell us you have nothing to buy with. Of course I cannot sell such things to the other farmers, because each of them raises enough for himself, and in fact rather wishes to sell than to buy. Neither can I send them to Europe for a market, because, to say nothing of European markets being stocked with such articles at lower prices than I can afford, they are of such a nature as to rot before they could reach there. The truth is, Vulcan, I am compelled to quit raising these things altogether, except a few for my own use; and this leaves part of my own time idle on my hands, instead of my finding employment for you."

. . . . . .

If at any time all labor should cease, and all existing provisions be equally divided among the people, at the end of a single year there could scarcely be one human being left alive; all would have perished by want of subsistence. So, again, if upon such division all that sort of labor which produces provisions should cease, and each individual should take up so much of his share as he could, and carry it continually around his habitation, although in this carrying the amount of labor going on might be as great as ever so long as it could last, at the end of the year the result would be precisely the same—that is, none would be left living.

The first of these propositions shows that universal idleness would speedily result in universal ruin; and the second shows that useless labor is, in this respect, the same as idleness. I submit, then, whether it does not follow that partial idleness and partial useless labor would, in the proportion of their extent, in like manner result in partial ruin; whether, if all should subsist upon the labor that one half should perform, it would not result in very scanty allowance to the whole.

Believing that these propositions and the conclusions I draw from them cannot be successfully controverted, I for the present assume their correctness, and proceed to try to show that the abandonment of the protective policy by the

American government must result in the increase of both useless labor and idleness, and so, in proportion, must produce want and ruin among our people.

(The foregoing scraps about protection were written by Lincoln between his election to Congress in 1846 and taking his seat in December, 1847.—N. and H.)

## Letter to William H. Herndon [1]

Washington, December 5, 1847.

*Dear William:* You may remember that about a year ago a man by the name of Wilson (James Wilson, I think) paid us twenty dollars as an advance fee to attend to a case in the Supreme Court for him, against a Mr. Campbell, the record of which case was in the hands of Mr. Dixon of St. Louis, who never furnished it to us. When I was at Bloomington last fall, I met a friend of Wilson, who mentioned the subject to me, and induced me to write to Wilson, telling him I would leave the ten dollars with you which had been left with me to pay for making abstracts in the case, so that the case

[1] Herndon and Lincoln became law partners in 1845, an arrangement lasting through the latter's life. Herndon wrote a biography of his celebrated associate which caused wide discussion because of many of its statements. But it is owing to Herndon's tireless efforts that we now possess so many early letters and other manuscripts of Lincoln's younger years.

may go on this winter; but I came away, and forgot to do it. What I want now is to send you the money, to be used accordingly, if any one comes on to start the case, or to be retained by you if no one does.

There is nothing of consequence new here. Congress is to organize to-morrow. Last night we held a Whig caucus for the House, and nominated Winthrop of Massachusetts for speaker, Sargent of Pennsylvania for sergeant-at-arms, Homer of New Jersey doorkeeper, and McCormick of District of Columbia postmaster. The Whig majority in the House is so small that, together with some little dissatisfaction, [it] leaves it doubtful whether we will elect them all.

This paper is too thick to fold, which is the reason I send only a half-sheet.

Yours as ever, A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO WILLIAM H. HERNDON [1]

WASHINGTON, December 13, 1847.

*Dear William:* Your letter, advising me of the receipt of our fee in the bank case, is just

[1] In reference to the directions given to Herndon for disposing of money, it is interesting to recall that Lincoln was at this time paying off what he called his "national debt." This debt was contracted fourteen years before, when Lincoln and Berry had opened a store and failed. Shortly afterwards Berry drank him-

received, and I don't expect to hear another as good a piece of news from Springfield while I am away. I am under no obligations to the bank; and I therefore wish you to buy bank certificates, and pay my debt there, so as to pay it with the least money possible. I would as soon you should buy them of Mr. Ridgely, or any other person at the bank, as of any one else, provided you can get them as cheaply. I suppose, after the bank debt shall be paid, there will be some money left, out of which I would like to have you pay Lavely and Stout twenty dollars, and Priest and somebody (oil-makers) ten dollars, for materials got for house-painting. If there shall still be any left, keep it till you see or hear from me.

I shall begin sending documents so soon as I can get them. I wrote you yesterday about a "Congressional Globe." As you are all so anxious for me to distinguish myself, I have concluded to do so before long. Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

self to death, while the men who bought the store never paid for it. Nevertheless Lincoln shouldered the responsibility and eventually paid off the old debt.

## Resolutions in the United States House of Representatives, December 22, 1847

WHEREAS, The President of the United States, in his message of May 11, 1846, has declared that "the Mexican Government not only refused to receive him [the envoy of the United States], or to listen to his propositions, but, after a long-continued series of menaces, has at last invaded our territory and shed the blood of our fellow-citizens on our own soil."

And again, in his message of December 8, 1846, that "we had ample cause of war against Mexico long before the breaking out of hostilities; but even then we forbore to take redress into our own hands until Mexico herself became the aggressor, by invading our soil in hostile array, and shedding the blood of our citizens."

And yet again, in his message of December 7, 1847, that "the Mexican Government refused even to hear the terms of adjustment which he [our minister of peace] was authorized to propose, and finally, under wholly unjustifiable pretexts, involved the two countries in war, by invading the territory of the State of Texas, strik-

ing the first blow, and shedding the blood of our citizens on our own soil."

*And whereas,* This House is desirous to obtain a full knowledge of all the facts which go to establish whether the particular spot on which the blood of our citizens was so shed was or was not at that time our own soil; therefore,

*Resolved,* By the House of Representatives, that the President of the United States be respectfully requested to inform this House—

First. Whether the spot on which the blood of our citizens was shed, as in his message declared, was or was not within the territory of Spain, at least after the treaty of 1819 until the Mexican revolution.

Second. Whether that spot is or is not within the territory which was wrested from Spain by the revolutionary Government of Mexico.

Third. Whether that spot is or is not within a settlement of people, which settlement has existed ever since long before the Texas revolution, and until its inhabitants fled before the approach of the United States army.

Fourth. Whether that settlement is or is not isolated from any and all other settlements by the Gulf and the Rio Grande on the south and west, and by wide uninhabited regions on the north and east.

Fifth. Whether the people of that settlement,

or a majority of them, or any of them, have ever submitted themselves to the government or laws of Texas or of the United States, by consent or by compulsion, either by accepting office, or voting at elections, or paying tax, or serving on juries, or having process served upon them, or in any other way.

Sixth. Whether the people of that settlement did or did not flee from the approach of the United States army, leaving unprotected their homes and their growing crops, *before* the blood was shed, as in the message stated; and whether the first blood, so shed, was or was not shed within the inclosure of one of the people who had thus fled from it.

Seventh. Whether our citizens, whose blood was shed, as in his message declared, were or were not, at that time, armed officers and soldiers, sent into that settlement by the military order of the President, through the Secretary of War.

Eighth. Whether the military force of the United States was or was not so sent into that settlement after General Taylor had more than once intimated to the War Department that, in his opinion, no such movement was necessary to the defense or protection of Texas.

## Remarks in the United States House of Representatives, January 5, 1848

Mr. Lincoln said he had made an effort, some few days since, to obtain the floor in relation to this measure [resolution to direct Postmaster-General to make arrangements with railroad for carrying the mails—in Committee of the Whole], but had failed. One of the objects he had then had in view was now in a great measure superseded by what had fallen from the gentleman from Virginia who had just taken his seat. He begged to assure his friends on the other side of the House that no assault whatever was meant upon the Postmaster-General, and he was glad that what the gentleman had now said modified to a great extent the impression which might have been created by the language he had used on a previous occasion. He wanted to state to gentlemen who might have entertained such impressions, that the Committee on the Post-office was composed of five Whigs and four Democrats, and their report was understood as sustaining, not impugning, the position taken by the Postmaster-General. That report had met with the approbation of all the Whigs, and of all the Democrats also, with the exception of one, and he wanted to go even further

than this. [Intimation was informally given Mr. Lincoln that it was not in order to mention on the floor what had taken place in committee.] He then observed that if he had been out of order in what he had said, he took it all back so far as he could. He had no desire, he could assure gentlemen, ever to be out of order—though he never could keep long in order.

Mr. Lincoln went on to observe that he differed in opinion, in the present case, from his honorable friend from Richmond [Mr. Botts]. That gentleman had begun his remarks by saying that if all prepossessions in this matter could be removed out of the way, but little difficulty would be experienced in coming to an agreement. Now, he could assure that gentleman that he had himself begun the examination of the subject with prepossessions all in his favor. He had long and often heard of him, and, from what he had heard, was prepossessed in his favor. Of the Postmaster-General he had also heard, but had no prepossessions in his favor, though certainly none of an opposite kind. He differed, however, with that gentleman in politics, while in this respect he agreed with the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Botts], whom he wished to oblige whenever it was in his power. That gentleman had referred to the report made to the House by the Postmaster-General,

and had intimated an apprehension that gentlemen would be disposed to rely on that report alone, and derive their views of the case from that document alone. Now it so happened that a pamphlet had been slipped into his [Mr. Lincoln's] hand before he read the report of the Postmaster-General; so that, even in this, he had begun with prepossessions in favor of the gentleman from Virginia.

As to the report, he had but one remark to make: he had carefully examined it, and he did not understand that there was any dispute as to the facts therein stated—the dispute, if he understood it, was confined altogether to the inferences to be drawn from those facts. It was a difference not about facts, but about conclusions. The facts were not disputed. If he was right in this, he supposed the House might assume the facts to be as they were stated, and thence proceed to draw their own conclusions.

The gentleman had said that the Postmaster-General had got into a personal squabble with the railroad company. Of this Mr. Lincoln knew nothing, nor did he need or desire to know anything, because it had nothing whatever to do with a just conclusion from the premises. But the gentleman had gone on to ask whether so great a grievance as the present detention of the Southern mail ought not to be remedied?

Mr. Lincoln would assure the gentleman that if there was a proper way of doing it, no man was more anxious than he that it should be done. The report made by the committee had been intended to yield much for the sake of removing that grievance. That the grievance was very great, there was no dispute in any quarter. He supposed that the statements made by the gentleman from Virginia to show this were all entirely correct in point of fact. He did suppose that the interruptions of regular intercourse, and all the other inconveniences growing out of it, were all as that gentleman had stated them to be; and certainly, if redress could be rendered, it was proper it should be rendered as soon as possible. The gentleman said that in order to effect this, no new legislative action was needed; all that was necessary was that the Postmaster-General should be required to do what the law, as it stood, authorized and required him to do.

We come then, said Mr. Lincoln, to the law. Now the Postmaster-General says he cannot give to this company more than two hundred and thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents per railroad mile of transportation, and twelve and half per cent. less for transportation by steamboats. He considers himself as restricted by law to this amount; and he says, further, that he would not

give more if he could, because in his apprehension it would not be fair and just.

## Letter to William H. Herndon

Washington, January 8, 1848.

*Dear William:* Your letter of December 27 was received a day or two ago. I am much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken, and promise to take in my little business there. As to speech-making, by way of getting the hang of the House I made a little speech two or three days ago on a post-office question of no general interest. I find speaking here and elsewhere about the same thing. I was about as badly scared, and no worse, as I am when I speak in court. I expect to make one within a week or two, in which I hope to succeed well enough to wish you to see it.

It is very pleasant to learn from you that there are some who desire that I should be reëlected. I most heartily thank them for their kind partiality; and I can say, as Mr. Clay said of the annexation of Texas, that "personally I would not object" to a reëlection, although I thought at the time, and still think, it would be quite as well for me to return to the law at the end of a single term. I made the declaration that I would not be a candidate again, more from a wish to deal fairly with others, to keep peace among our

friends, and to keep the district from going to the enemy, than for any cause personal to myself; so that, if it should so happen that nobody else wishes to be elected, I could not refuse the people the right of sending me again. But to enter myself as a competitor of others, or to authorize any one so to enter me, is what my word and honor forbid.

I got some letters intimating a probability of so much difficulty amongst our friends as to lose us the district; but I remember such letters were written to Baker when my own case was under consideration, and I trust there is no more ground for such apprehension now than there was then. Remember I am always glad to receive a letter from you. Most truly your friend,

A. LINCOLN.

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A. LINCOLN.

Executive Mansion,

Washington, ....., 186 .

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal"

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it, as a final resting place for those who died here, that the nation might live. This we may, in all propriety do. But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate — we can not consecrate — we can not hallow this ground — The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have hallowed it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here; while it can never forget what they did here.

It is rather for us, the living, ~~we here be dedicated~~ to the great task remaining before us — that, from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here, gave the last full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve these dead shall not have died in vain; — that this nation, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people by the people for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

The Gettysburg Address, November 19, 1863.

Facsimile of the Original *First* Version of the Address made at the Dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, November 19, 1863.

## Speech in the United States House of Representatives, January 12, 1848[1]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Some if not all the gentlemen on the other side of the House who have addressed the committee within the last two days have spoken rather complainingly, if I have rightly understood them, of the vote given a week or ten days ago declaring that the war with Mexico was unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced by the President. I admit that such a vote should not be given in mere party wantonness, and that the one given is justly censurable, if

[1] It is well known that the Mexican War arose out of the question of the southern boundary of the newly acquired territory of Texas. In 1846 President Polk had sent an expedition under General Taylor to the Rio Grande and had there caused the erection of Fort Brown. The Mexicans claimed this to be within their border, and attacked the fort. Thereupon Polk sent a message to Congress stating that Mexico "had shed American blood upon American soil." Lincoln, then in his first congressional session, opposed the President and presented resolutions, demanding to be told the "particular spot" on which the American blood had been shed, claiming that the question of boundary was so unsettled that the President's act in sending the Fort Brown expedition amounted to aggression. These "spot resolutions" were widely discussed.

it have no other or better foundation. I am one of those who joined in that vote; and I did so under my best impression of the truth of the case. How I got this impression, and how it may possibly be remedied, I will now try to show. When the war began, it was my opinion that all those who because of knowing too little, or because of knowing too much, could not conscientiously oppose the conduct of the President in the beginning of it should nevertheless, as good citizens and patriots, remain silent on that point, at least till the war should be ended. Some leading Democrats, including ex-President Van Buren, have taken this same view, as I understand them; and I adhered to it and acted upon it, until since I took my seat here; and I think I should still adhere to it were it not that the President and his friends will not allow it to be so. Besides the continual effort of the President to argue every silent vote given for supplies into an indorsement of the justice and wisdom of his conduct; besides that singularly candid paragraph in his late message in which he tells us that Congress with great unanimity had declared that "by the act of the Republic of Mexico, a state of war exists between that Government and the United States," when the same journals that informed him of this also informed him that when that declara-

tion stood disconnected from the question of supplies sixty-seven in the House, and not fourteen merely, voted against it; besides this open attempt to prove by telling the truth what he could not prove by telling the whole truth—demanding of all who will no submit to be misrepresented, in justice to themselves, to speak out,—besides all this, one of my colleagues [Mr. Richardson] at a very early day in the session brought in a set of resolutions expressly indorsing the original justice of the war on the part of the President. Upon these resolutions when they shall be put on their passage I shall be compelled to vote; so that I cannot be silent if I would. Seeing this, I went about preparing myself to give the vote understandingly when it should come. I carefully examined the President's message, to ascertain what he himself had said and proved upon the point. The result of this examination was to make the impression that, taking for true all the President states as facts, he falls far short of proving his justification; and that the President would have gone farther with his proof if it had not been for the small matter that the truth would not permit him. Under the impression thus made I gave the vote before mentioned. I propose now to give concisely the process of the examination I made, and how I reached the conclusion I did.

The President, in his first war message of May, 1846, declares that the soil was ours on which hostilities were commenced by Mexico, and he repeats that declaration almost in the same language in each successive annual message, thus showing that he deems that point a highly essential one. In the importance of that point I entirely agree with the President. To my judgment it is the very point upon which he should be justified, or condemned. In his message of December, 1846, it seems to have occurred to him, as is certainly true, that title—ownership—to soil or anything else is not a simple fact, but is a conclusion following on one or more simple facts; and that it was incumbent upon him to present the facts from which he concluded the soil was ours on which the first blood of the war was shed.

Accordingly, a little below the middle of page twelve in the message last referred to he enters upon that task; forming an issue and introducing testimony, extending the whole to a little below the middle of page fourteen. Now, I propose to try to show that the whole of this—issue and evidence—is from beginning to end the sheerest deception. The issue, as he presents it, is in these words: "But there are those who, conceding all this to be true, assume the ground that the true western boundary of Texas is the

Nueces, instead of the Rio Grande; and that, therefore, in marching our army to the east bank of the latter river, we passed the Texas line and invaded the territory of Mexico." Now this issue is made up of two affirmatives and no negative. The main deception of it is that it assumes as true that one river or the other is necessarily the boundary; and cheats the superficial thinker entirely out of the idea that possibly the boundary is somewhere between the two, and not actually at either. A further deception is that it will let in evidence which a true issue would exclude. A true issue made by the President would be about as follows: "I say the soil was ours, on which the first blood was shed; there are those who say it was not."

I now proceed to examine the President's evidence as applicable to such an issue. When that evidence is analyzed, it is all included in the following propositions:

(1) That the Rio Grande was the western boundary of Louisiana as we purchased it of France in 1803.

(2) That the Republic of Texas always claimed the Rio Grande as her western boundary.

(3) That by various acts she had claimed it on paper.

(4) That Santa Anna in his treaty with Texas recognized the Rio Grande as her boundary.

(5) That Texas before, and the United States after, annexation had exercised jurisdiction beyond the Nueces—between the two rivers.

(6) That our Congress understood the boundary of Texas to extend beyond the Nueces.

Now for each of these in its turn. His first item is that the Rio Grande was the western boundary of Louisiana, as we purchased it of France in 1803; and seeming to expect this to be disputed, he argues over the amount of nearly a page to prove it true; at the end of which he lets us know that by the treaty of 1819 we sold to Spain the whole country from the Rio Grande eastward to the Sabine. Now, admitting for the present that the Rio Grande was the boundary of Louisiana, what, under heaven, had that to do with the present boundary between us and Mexico? How, Mr. Chairman, the line that once divided your land from mine can still be the boundary between us after I have sold my land to you is to me beyond all comprehension. And how any man, with an honest purpose only of proving the truth, could ever have thought of introducing such a fact to prove such an issue is equally incomprehensible. His next piece of evidence is that "the Republic of Texas always claimed this river (Rio Grande) as her western

boundary." That is not true, in fact. Texas has claimed it, but she has not always claimed it. There is at least one distinguished exception. Her State constitution—the republic's most solemn and well-considered act; that which may, without impropriety, be called her last will and testament, revoking all others—makes no such claim. But suppose she had always claimed it. Has not Mexico always claimed the contrary? So that there is but claim against claim, leaving nothing proved until we get back of the claims and find which has the better foundation. Though not in the order in which the President presents his evidence, I now consider that class of his statements which are in substance nothing more than that Texas has, by various acts of her Convention and Congress, claimed the Rio Grande as her boundary, on paper. I mean here what he says about the fixing of the Rio Grande as her boundary in her old constitution (not her State constitution), about forming congressional districts, counties, etc. Now all of this is but naked claim; and what I have already said about claims is strictly applicable to this. If I should claim your land by word of mouth, that certainly would not make it mine; and if I were to claim it by a deed which I had made myself, and with which you had had nothing to do, the claim would be quite the same in substance—or

rather, in utter nothingness. I next consider the President's statement that Santa Anna in his treaty with Texas recognized the Rio Grande as the western boundary of Texas. Besides the position so often taken, that Santa Anna while a prisoner of war, a captive, could not bind Mexico by a treaty, which I deem conclusive—besides this, I wish to say something in relation to this treaty, so called by the President, with Santa Anna. If any man would like to be amused by a sight of that little thing which the President calls by that big name, he can have it by turning to "Niles's Register," Vol. L, p. 336. And if any one should suppose that "Niles's Register" is a curious repository of so mighty a document as a solemn treaty between nations, I can only say that I learned to a tolerable degree of certainty, by inquiry at the State Department, that the President himself never saw it anywhere else. By the way, I believe I should not err if I were to declare that during the first ten years of the existence of that document it was never by anybody called a treaty—that it was never so called till the President, in his extremity, attempted by so calling it to wring something from it in justification of himself in connection with the Mexican war. It has none of the distinguishing features of a treaty. It does not call itself a treaty. Santa Anna does not therein as-

sume to bind Mexico; he assumes only to act as the President-Commander-in-Chief of the Mexican army and navy; stipulates that the then present hostilities should cease, and that he would not himself take up arms, nor influence the Mexican people to take up arms, against Texas during the existence of the war of independence. He did not recognize the independence of Texas; he did not assume to put an end to the war, but clearly indicated his expectation of its continuance; he did not say one word about boundary, and, most probably, never thought of it. It is stipulated therein that the Mexican forces should evacuate the territory of Texas, passing to the other side of the Rio Grande; and in another article it is stipulated that, to prevent collisions between the armies, the Texas army should not approach nearer than within five leagues—of what is not said, but clearly, from the object stated, it is of the Rio Grande. Now, if this is a treaty recognizing the Rio Grande as the boundary of Texas, it contains the singular features of stipulating that Texas shall not go within five leagues of her own boundary.

Next comes the evidence of Texas before annexation, and the United States afterward, exercising jurisdiction beyond the Nueces and between the two rivers. This actual exercise of jurisdiction is the very class or quality of evi-

dence we want. It is excellent so far as it goes; but does it go far enough? He tells us it went beyond the Nueces, but he does not tell us it went to the Rio Grande. He tells us jurisdiction was exercised between the two rivers, but he does not tell us it was exercised over all the territory between them. Some simple-minded people think it is possible to cross one river and go beyond it without going all the way to the next, that jurisdiction may be exercised between two rivers without covering all the country between them. I know a man, not very unlike myself, who exercises jurisdiction over a piece of land between the Wabash and the Mississippi; and yet so far is this from being all there is between those rivers that it is just one hundred and fifty-two feet long by fifty feet wide, and no part of it much within a hundred miles either. He has a neighbor between him and the Mississippi—that is, just across the street, in that direction—whom I am sure he could neither persuade nor force to give up his habitation; but which nevertheless he could certainly annex, if it were to be done by merely standing on his own side of the street and claiming it, or even sitting down and writing a deed for it.

But next the President tells us the Congress of the United States understood the State of Texas they admitted into the Union to extend

beyond the Nueces. Well, I suppose they did. I certainly so understood it. But how far beyond? That Congress did not understand it to extend clear to the Rio Grande is quite certain, by the fact of their joint resolutions for admission expressly leaving all questions of boundary to future adjustment. And it may be added that Texas herself is proved to have had the same understanding of it that our Congress had, by the fact of the exact conformity of her new constitution to those resolutions.

I am now through the whole of the President's evidence; and it is a singular fact that if any one should declare the President sent the army into the midst of a settlement of Mexican people who had never submitted, by consent or by force, to the authority of Texas or of the United States, and that there and thereby the first blood of the war was shed, there is not one word in all the President has said which would either admit or deny the declaration. This strange omission it does seem to me could not have occurred but by design. My way of living leads me to be about the courts of justice; and there I have sometimes seen a good lawyer, struggling for his client's neck in a desperate case, employing every artifice to work round, befog, and cover up with many words some point arising in the case which he dared not

admit and yet could not deny. Party bias may help to make it appear so, but with all the allowance I can make for such bias, it still does appear to me that just such, and from just such necessity, is the President's struggle in this case.

Some time after my colleague [Mr. Richardson] introduced the resolutions I have mentioned, I introduced a preamble, resolution, and interrogations, intended to draw the President out, if possible, on this hitherto untrodden ground. To show their relevancy, I propose to state my understanding of the true rule for ascertaining the boundary between Texas and Mexico. It is that wherever Texas was exercising jurisdiction was hers; and wherever Mexico was exercising jurisdiction was hers; and that whatever separated the actual exercise of jurisdiction of the one from that of the other was the true boundary between them. If, as is probably true, Texas was exercising jurisdiction along the western bank of the Nueces, and Mexico was exercising it along the eastern bank of the Rio Grande, then neither river was the boundary; but the uninhabited country between the two was. The extent of our territory in that region depended not on any treaty-fixed boundary (for no treaty had attempted it), but on revolution. Any people anywhere being inclined and having the power have the right to

rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right—a right which we hope and believe is to liberate the world. Nor is this right confined to cases in which the whole people of an existing government may choose to exercise it. Any portion of such people that can may revolutionize and make their own of so much of the territory as they inhabit. More than this, a majority of any portion of such people may revolutionize, putting down a minority, intermingled with or near about them, who may oppose this movement. Such minority was precisely the case of the Tories of our own revolution. It is a quality of revolutions not to go by old lines or old laws; but to break up both, and make new ones.

As to the country now in question, we bought it of France in 1803, and sold it to Spain in 1819, according to the President's statements. After this, all Mexico, including Texas, revolutionized against Spain; still later Texas revolutionized against Mexico. In my view, just so far as she carried her resolution by obtaining the actual, willing or unwilling, submission of the people, so far the country was hers, and no farther. Now, sir, for the purpose of obtaining the very best evidence as to whether Texas had actually carried her revolution to

the place where the hostilities of the present war commenced, let the President answer the interrogatories I proposed, as before mentioned, or some other similar ones. Let him answer fully, fairly, and candidly. Let him answer with facts and not with arguments. Let him remember he sits where Washington sat, and so remembering, let him answer as Washington would answer. As a nation should not, and the Almighty will not, be evaded, so let him attempt no evasion—no equivocation. And if, so answering, he can show that the soil was ours where the first blood of the war was shed,—that it was not within an inhabited country, or, if within such, that the inhabitants had submitted themselves to the civil authority of Texas or of the United States, and that the same is true of the site of Fort Brown,—then I am with him for his justification. In that case I shall be most happy to reverse the vote I gave the other day. I have a selfish motive for desiring that the President may do this—I expect to gain some votes, in connection with the war, which, without his so doing,, will be of doubtful propriety in my own judgment, but which will be free from the doubt if he does so. But if he can not or will not do this,—if on any pretense or no pretense he shall refuse or omit it—then I shall be fully convinced of what I more than

suspect already—that he is deeply conscious of being in the wrong; that he feels the blood of this war, like the blood of Abel, is crying to Heaven against him; that originally having some strong motive—what, I will not stop now to give my opinion concerning—to involve the two countries in a war, and trusting to escape scrutiny by fixing the public gaze upon the exceeding brightness of military glory,—that attractive rainbow that arises in showers of blood—that serpent's eye that charms to destroy,—he plunged into it, and has swept on and on till, disappointed in his calculation of the ease with which Mexico might be subdued, he now finds himself he knows not where. How like the half-insane mumbling of a fever dream is the whole war part of his late message! At one time telling us that Mexico has nothing whatever that we can get but territory; at another showing us how we can support the war by levying contributions on Mexico. At one time urging the national honor, the security of the future, the prevention of foreign interference, and even the good of Mexico herself as among the objects of the war; at another telling us that "to reject indemnity, by refusing to accept a cession of territory, would be to abandon all our just demands, and to wage the war bearing all its expenses, without a purpose or definite object."

So then this national honor, security of the future, and everything but territorial indemnity may be considered the no-purpose and indefinite objects of the war! But, having it now settled that territorial indemnity is the only object, we are urged to seize, by legislation here, all that he was content to take a few months ago, and the whole province of Lower California to boot, and to still carry on the war—to take all we are fighting for, and still fight on. Again, the President is resolved under all circumstances to have full territorial indemnity for the expenses of the war; but he forgets to tell us how we are to get the excess after those expenses shall have surpassed the value of the whole of the Mexican territory. So again, he insists that the separate national existence of Mexico shall be maintained; but he does not tell us how this can be done, after we shall have taken all her territory. Lest the questions I have suggested be considered speculative merely, let me be indulged a moment in trying to show they are not. The war has gone on some twenty months; for the expenses of which, together with an inconsiderable old score, the President now claims about one half of the Mexican territory, and that by far the better half, so far as concerns our ability to make anything out of it. It is comparatively uninhabited; so that we could establish land

offices in it, and raise some money in that way. But the other half is already inhabited, as I understand it, tolerably densely for the nature of the country, and all its lands, or all that are valuable, already appropriated as private property. How then are we to make anything out of these lands with this encumbrance upon them? or how remove the encumbrance? I suppose no one would say we should kill the people, or drive them out, or make slaves of them; or confiscate their property. How, then, can we make much out of this part of the territory? If the prosecution of the war has in expenses already equaled the better half of the country, how long its future prosecution will be in equaling the less valuable half is not a speculative, but a practical, question, pressing closely upon us. And yet it is a question which the President seems never to have thought of. As to the mode of terminating the war and securing peace, the President is equally wandering and indefinite. First, it is to be done by a more vigorous prosecution of the war in the vital parts of the enemy's country; and after apparently talking himself tired on this point, the President drops down into a half-despairing tone, and tells us that "with a people distracted and divided by contending factions, and a government subject to constant changes by successive revolutions, the

continued success of our arms may fail to secure a satisfactory peace." Then he suggests the propriety of wheedling the Mexican people to desert the counsels of their own leaders, and, trusting in our protestations, to set up a government from which we can secure a satisfactory peace; telling us that "this may become the only mode of obtaining such a peace." But soon he falls into a doubt of this too; and then drops back onto the already half-abandoned ground of "more vigorous prosecution." All this shows that the President is in nowise satisfied with his own positions. First he takes up one, and in attempting to argue us into it he argues himself out of it, then seizes another and goes through the same process, and then, confused at being able to think of nothing new, he snatches up the old one again, which he has some time before cast off. His mind, taxed beyond its power, is running hither and thither, like some tortured creature on a burning surface, finding no position on which it can settle down and be at ease.

Again, it is a singular omission in this message that it nowhere intimates when the President expects the war to terminate. At its beginning, General Scott was by this same President driven into disfavor, if not disgrace, for intimating that peace could not be conquered in less than three or four months. But now, at the end of about

twenty months, during which time our arms have given us the most splendid successes, every department and every part, land and water, officers and privates, regulars and volunteers, doing all that men could do, and hundreds of things which it had ever before been thought men could not do—after all this, this same President gives us a long message, without showing us that as to the end he himself has even an imaginary conception. As I have before said, he knows not where he is. He is a bewildered, confounded, and miserably perplexed man. God grant he may be able to show there is not something about his conscience more painful than all his mental perplexity.

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The following is a copy of the so-called "treaty" referred to in the speech:

Articles of Agreement entered into between his Excellency David G. Burnet, President of the Republic of Texas, of the one part, and his Excellency General Santa Anna, President-General-in-Chief of the Mexican Army, of the other part.

Article I. General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna agrees that he will not take up arms, nor will he exercise his influence to cause them to be taken up, against the people of Texas during the present war of independence.

Article II. All hostilities between the Mexican

and Texan troops will cease immediately, both by land and water.

Article III. The Mexican troops will evacuate the territory of Texas, passing to the other side of the Rio Grande Del Norte.

Article IV. The Mexican army, in its retreat, shall not take the property of any person without his consent and just indemnification, using only such articles as may be necessary for its subsistence, in cases when the owner may not be present, and remitting to the commander of the army of Texas, or to the commissioners to be appointed for the adjustment of such matters, an account of the value of the property consumed, the place where taken, and the name of the owner, if it can be ascertained.

Article V. That all private property, including cattle, horses, negro slaves, or indentured persons, of whatever denomination, that may have been captured by any portion of the Mexican army, or may have taken refuge in the said army, since the commencement of the late invasion, shall be restored to the commander of the Texan army, or to such other persons as may be appointed by the Government of Texas to receive them.

Article VI. The troops of both armies will refrain from coming in contact with each other; and to this end the commander of the army of Texas will be careful not to approach within a shorter distance than five leagues.

Article VII. The Mexican army shall not make any other delay on its march than that which is nec-

essary to take up their hospitals, baggage, etc., and to cross the rivers; any delay not necessary to these purposes to be considered an infraction of this agreement.

Article VIII. By an express, to be immediately despatched, this agreement shall be sent to General Vincente Filisola and to General T. J. Rusk, commander of the Texan army, in order that they may be apprized of its stipulations; and to this end they will exchange engagements to comply with the same.

Article IX. That all Texan prisoners now in the possession of the Mexican army, or its authorities, be forthwith released, and furnished with free passports to return to their homes; in consideration of which a corresponding number of Mexican prisoners, rank and file, now in possession of the Government of Texas shall be immediately released; the remainder of the Mexican prisoners that continue in the possession of the Government of Texas to be treated with due humanity,—any extraordinary comforts that may be furnished them to be at the charge of the Government of Mexico.

Article X. General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna will be sent to Vera Cruz as soon as it shall be deemed proper.

The contracting parties sign this instrument for the above-mentioned purposes, in duplicate, at the port of Velasco, this fourteenth day of May, 1836.

David G. Burnet, *President,*
Jas. Collingsworth, *Secretary of State,*
Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna,
B. Hardiman, *Secretary of the Treasury,*
P. W. Grayson, *Attorney-General.*

## Report in the United States House of Representatives, January 19, 1848.

MR. LINCOLN, from the Committee on the Post-Office and Post Roads, made the following report:

The Committee on the Post-Office and Post Roads, to whom was referred the petition of Messrs. Saltmarsh and Fuller, report: That, as proved to their satisfaction, the mail routes from Milledgeville to Athens, and from Warrenton to Decatur, in the State of Georgia (numbered 2366 and 2380), were let to Reeside and Avery at $1300 per annum for the former and $1500 for the latter, for the term of four years, to commence on the first day of January, 1835; that, previous to the time for commencing the service, Reeside sold his interest therein to Avery; that on the 11th of May, 1835, Avery sold the whole to these petitioners, Saltmarsh and Fuller, to take effect from the beginning, January 1, 1835; that, at this time, the Assistant Postmaster-General, being called on for that purpose, consented to the transfer of the contracts from Reeside and Avery to these petitioners, and promised to have proper entries of the transfer

made on the books of the department, which, however, was neglected to be done; that the petitioners, supposing all was right, in good faith commenced the transportation of the mail on these routes, and after difficulty arose, still trusting that all would be made right, continued the service till December 1, 1837; that they performed the service to the entire satisfaction of the department, and have never been paid anything for it except $——; that the difficulty occurred as follows: Mr. Barry was Postmaster-General at the times of making the contracts and the attempted transfer of them; Mr. Kendall succeeded Mr. Barry, and finding Reeside apparently in debt to the department, and these contracts still standing in the names of Reeside and Avery, refused to pay for the services under them, otherwise than by credits to Reeside; afterward, however, he divided the compensation, still crediting one half to Reeside, and directing the other to be paid to the order of Avery, who disclaimed all right to it. After discontinuing the service, these petitioners, supposing they might have legal redress against Avery, brought suit against him in New Orleans; in which suit they failed, on the ground that Avery had complied with his contract, having done so much toward the transfer as they had accepted and been satisfied with. Still later the

department sued Reeside on his supposed indebtedness, and by a verdict of the jury it was determined that the department was indebted to him in a sum much beyond all the credits given him on the account above stated. Under these circumstances, the committee consider the petitioners clearly entitled to relief, and they report a bill accordingly; lest, however, there should be some mistake as to the amount which they have already received, we so frame it as that, by adjustment at the department, they may be paid so much as remains unpaid for service actually performed by them—not charging them with the credits given to Reeside. The committee think it not improbable that the petitioners purchased the right of Avery to be paid for the service from the 1st of January, till their purchase on May 11, 1835; but the evidence on this point being very vague, they forbear to report in favor of allowing it.

## Letter to William H. Herndon

Washington, January 19, 1848.

*Dear William:* Inclosed you find a letter of Louis W. Chandler. What is wanted is that you shall ascertain whether the claim upon the note described has received any dividend in the Probate Court of Christian County, where the estate of Mr. Overton Williams has been admin-

istered on. If nothing is paid on it, withdraw the note and send it to me, so that Chandler can see the indorser of it. At all events write me all about it, till I can somehow get it off my hands. I have already been bored more than enough about it; not the least of which annoyance is his cursed, unreadable, and ungodly handwriting.

I have made a speech, a copy of which I will send you by next mail.

Yours as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO WILLIAM H. HERNDON

WASHINGTON, February 1, 1848.

*Dear William:* Your letter of the 19th ultimo was received last night, and for which I am much obliged. The only thing in it that I wish to talk to you at once about is that because of my vote for Ashmun's amendment you fear that you and I disagree about the war. I regret this, not because of any fear we shall remain disagreed after you have read this letter, but because if you misunderstand I fear other good friends may also. That vote affirms that the war was unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced by the President; and I will stake my life that if you had been in my place you would have voted just as I did. Would you

have voted what you felt and knew to be a lie? I know you would not. Would you have gone out of the House—skulked the vote? I expect not. If you had skulked one vote, you would have had to skulk many more before the end of the session. Richardson's resolutions, introduced before I made any move or gave any vote upon the subject, make the direct question of the justice of the war; so that no man can be silent if he would. You are compelled to speak; and your only alternative is to tell the truth or a lie. I cannot doubt which you would do.

This vote has nothing to do in determining my votes on the questions of supplies. I have always intended, and still intend, to vote supplies; perhaps not in the precise form recommended by the President, but in a better form for all purposes, except Locofoco party purposes. It is in this particular you seem mistaken. The Locos are untiring in their efforts to make the impression that all who vote supplies or take part in the war do of necessity approve the President's conduct in the beginning of it; but the Whigs have from the beginning made and kept the distinction between the two. In the very first act nearly all the Whigs voted against the preamble declaring that war existed by the act of Mexico; and yet nearly all of them voted for the supplies. As to the Whig men who have

participated in the war, so far as they have spoken in my hearing, they do not hesitate to pronounce as unjust the President's conduct in the beginning of the war. They do not suppose that such denunciation is directed by undying hatred to him, as "The Register" would have it believed. There are two such Whigs on this floor (Colonel Haskell and Major James). The former fought as a colonel by the side of Colonel Baker at Cerro Gordo, and stands side by side with me in the vote that you seem dissatisfied with. The latter, the history of whose capture with Cassius Clay you well know, had not arrived here when that vote was given; but, as I understand, he stands ready to give just such a vote whenever an occasion shall present. Baker, too, who is now here, says the truth is undoubtedly that way; and whenever he shall speak out, he will say so. Colonel Doniphan, too, the favorite Whig of Missouri, and who overran all Northern Mexico, on his return home in a public speech at St. Louis condemned the administration in relation to the war, if I remember. G. T. M. Davis, who has been through almost the whole war, declares in favor of Mr. Clay; from which I infer that he adopts the sentiments of Mr. Clay, generally at least. On the other hand, I have heard of but one Whig who has been to the war attempting to justify

the President's conduct. That one was Captain Bishop, editor of the "Charleston Courier," and a very clever fellow. I do not mean this letter for the public, but for you. Before it reaches you, you will have seen and read my pamphlet speech, and perhaps been scared anew by it. After you get over your scare, read it over again, sentence by sentence, and tell me honestly what you think of it. I condensed all I could for fear of being cut off by the hour rule, and when I got through I had spoken but forty-five minutes.

Yours forever,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO WILLIAM HERNDON [1]

WASHINGTON, February 2, 1848.

*Dear William:* I just take my pen to say that Mr. Stephens, of Georgia, a little, slim, pale-faced, consumptive man, with a voice like Logan's, has just concluded the very best speech of an hour's length I ever heard. My old withered dry eyes are full of tears yet.

[1] The speech that so moved Lincoln was on the Mexican War. It is preserved in the "Congressional Globe" *Appendix* to the 1st session of the 30th Congress. The orator, Alexander Hamilton Stephens, played an important part in later events. He was a Whig member of Congress from 1843 to 1859. At the time the dissatisfied southern states held their convention he opposed secession but finally cast his lot with the Confederacy and became its vice-president.

If he writes it out anything like he delivered it, our people shall see a good many copies of it.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

TO WILLIAM H. HERNDON, ESQ.

## *LETTER TO JOSEPHUS HEWETT

WASHINGTON, February 13, 1848.

*Dear Hewett:* Your Whig representative from Mississippi, D. W. Tompkins, has just shown me a letter of yours to him. I am jealous because you did not write to me—perhaps you have forgotten me. Don't you remember a long black fellow who rode on horseback with you from Tremont to Springfield nearly ten year ago, swimming our horses over the Mackinaw on the trip? Well, I am that same one fellow yet. I was once of your opinion, expressed in your letter, that presidential electors should be dispensed with, but a more thorough knowledge of the causes that first introduced them has made me doubt. The causes were briefly these: The convention that framed the Constitution had this difficulty: the small States wished to so form the new government as that they might be equal to the large ones, regardless of the inequality of population; the large ones insisted on equality in proportion to population. They compromised it by basing the House of Representatives

on *population,* and the Senate on States regardless of population, and the execution of both principles by electors in each State, equal in number to her Senators and Representatives.

Now throw away the machinery of electors and this compromise is broken up and the whole yielded to the principle of the larger States. There is one thing more. In the slave States you have representatives, and consequently electors, partly upon the basis of your slave population, which would be swept away by the change you seem to think desirable. Have you ever reflected on these things?

But to come to the main point. I wish you to know that I have made a speech in Congress, and that I want you to be *enlightened* by reading it; to further which object I send you a copy of the speech by this mail.

For old acquaintance's sake, if for nothing else, be sure to write to me on receiving this. I was very near forgetting to tell you that on my being introduced to General Quitman and telling him I was from Springfield, Illinois, he at once remarked, "Then you know my valued friend Hewett of Natchez;" and on being assured I did, he said just such things about you as I like to hear said about my own valued friends.

Yours as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

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